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Miscellany.

A RECORD OF OLD ACTORS.

A quaint old book before us, with mouldy blotting-paper leaves and a seared back, which has evidently survived many book-stalls, supplies some interesting facts respecting the popular actors of the beginning of this century. It is more biographical than narrative, and more dry than either; but here and there a point or two of interest, occasionally of entertainment too, can be picked out. Many names that are past and forgotten are naturally to be found in its pages, and many that are living among us still, either in deed or memory. Liston, Kemble, Davenport, Blanchard, Kean the elder, Siddons, are all there with a crowd of others. Liston was, as is known, respectably born, and educated at Soho. At one time he was master of the Library School, Castle-street, Leicester; but acting convened to his taste more than tutorship, and he was a frequent amateur at the Haymarket. Not in comedy, though, at first: best of mimics though he afterwards became, tragedy was his primitive ambition. He played the part of *Pierre*. Tragedy was still his line of acting when he was engaged by Mr. Stephen Kemble. But he had not been long a performer in the company of that manager when he discovered that he had totally mistaken his own powers. He here essayed a comic cast of characters, and succeeded so fully in the attempt, that he thenceforth began to devote himself peculiarly to the performance of lower comedy. He acted old men and country boys with great applause in Newcastle and other towns which lay within the circuit of Mr. Stephen Kemble's company, and evinced powers of very whimsical and original humour. So much so, indeed, that Charles Kemble, travelling north, was struck with his talent, and recommended him to Colman, of the Haymarket. Colman accordingly welcomed Mr. Liston at the Haymarket theatre in the summer season of 1805, and the new candidate for public applause was introduced in the character of *Sheepface*, in the "*Village Lawyer*." His efforts on this occasion were crowned with the highest success, and a long list of subsequent performances ratified and increased his favour with the public. His celebrity reached the ears of Harris, of the Covent Garden theatre, and Liston received an engagement in that theatre. His appearing part there was *Jacob Gawkey*, in Mrs. Lee's comedy of the "*Chapter of Accidents*," which he acted on the 15th of October, 1805, and his success was such as to satisfy the most sanguine expectation. In 1807, about Easter time, he married Miss Tyrent, of Covent Garden, an actress of known reputation. They had no family. In private life he bore the best of characters, "belonging," says our sage little book, "to those very few performers who, by their gentlemanly appearance, their correct behaviour, and their general good breeding, are contributing to rescue the profession of the drama from the obloquy that has been cast upon it by prejudice and pride."

He never appears to have acted tragedy in London. In comedy he principally played old men, coxcombs of the day, before the word and genius "swell" were known, and stage countrymen. His representation of old men, says the chronicler, speaking of the actor as then living, are much beneath many of the attempts that are made in the same walk by inferior actors. The two characteristics which most strongly mark the appearance of old men in general, are decripitude of voice as well as body, and an air of cautious shrewdness. Nor does this air of shrewdness display itself merely in old men who are really shrewd; for long experience in the ways of the world gives, even to weak minds, a habitual caution, which wears the same external appearance, and which is not distinguishable from actual shrewdness, until conversation or situation may have thrown the wrinkled muscles of the face off their guard, or seduced the tongue to betray the weakness of the mind. These two characteristic appearances of weakness in voice as well as bodily deportment, and prudence, or the shew of prudence, in intellectual expression, is both forgotten or misunderstood by Mr. Liston, in his representations of old age. His steps are too long and quick, his voice too unvaryingly deep, and his face, when in these characters, if it assumes an expression at all, assumes the expression of vacancy, rather than of mental depth. In short, he makes himself an old man in nothing but the wrinkles that he traces on his countenance.

A thorough *Dundreary* of his day, Mr. Liston, like Mr. Sothern, was gentlemanly, natural in his caricaturing, and capable of holding the mirror up to the nature of swelldom. The chronicler is severe on the exaggerators of the genus. An actor who tries to divert by mimicking a volatile, lively kind of grace, will run great hazard of annoying by his pertness; but the singular merit of Mr. Liston's affectation is that he attracts the attention, without forcing himself upon the notice of his audience; he waits with the quiet air of a man who is satisfied with himself, and who feels sure of satisfying everybody else; while other stage coxcombs assume the boisterous by way of representing the lively.

Mr. Liston, enacting a fop, delights with the disjointed looseness by which he affects gracefulness of limb, and with the laborious manœuvres by which he aims at ease.

His *personnel* aided his comic art. He has a face which, while by some accident it is not displeasing, presents, nevertheless, a most eccentric example of the boldness with which nature can violate all her own established rules of beauty and proportion. This face has done a great deal for his fame; and no damsel of romance ever made a greater progress in glory, and in fortune, by her lovely countenance, than Mr. Liston has by his grotesque physiognomy. He has likewise a facility in relaxing his joints, which greatly aids his effects in such parts as *Caper*; and any other man who should attempt these characters, even if he had all the humour, and all the particular conception of Mr. Liston, would find that, without this natural looseness in the hips, he would do comparatively but little for the diversion of his audience.

So far (with a plaintive of Mr. Liston's weakness for gagging—a common enough fault in our own day), the chronicler. It is not uninteresting at this later period, when the great comedian's fame is still fresh, to read the opinion in which he was held by his contemporaries. Our chronicler, who inclines rather much to prosiness, winds up with an anecdote of Liston, the precise point of which it is difficult to see. The joke is exceedingly mild; but, in justice to our friend, we give it. He was acting *Lord Grizzle*, the hero of the burlesque tragedy of *Tom Thumb*; and among the other irresistible drolleries which he displays in the course of this admirably affected piece of acting, is a dance, which accompanies his song to *Huncamunca*. He was encored in this song and dance, and performed them a second time; and so entertaining was the repetition, that the audience called loud for a third performance. But Mr. Liston had made his exit: and though the universal uproar of shouts and applause prevented the piece from proceeding, he did not choose to gratify the spectators by returning. The clamour becoming louder and louder, he actually hid himself to avoid the third effort. But the discontent of the people, who now became quite unruly, at length brought him forward, and, coming down to the lamps, he very calmly told the audience, that he had been "really too much fatigued to repeat the dance." The people were some of them displeased and some of them diverted; but the piece went on very quietly, till, in the fight, some wag from the front of the house called out to the actor, who was fencing with Mr. Liston, "don't do too much, you'll fatigue him." This, of course, occasioned a universal laugh; and the next day a bulletin was stuck up in the green-room, stating that *Lord Grizzle's* physicians were happy to declare his lordship greatly recovered from his fatigue. The unlucky joke is still adhered to Mr. Liston; yet he may console himself by the uncertainty, that while he confines his humour within the bounds prescribed by the author, he may fatigue himself, but never will fatigue his audience.

PSALM-SINGING.

[From D'Israeli's *Curiosities of Literature*.]

To trace the history of modern metrical Psalmody, we must have recourse to Bayle, who, as a mere literary historian, has accidently preserved it. The inventor was a celebrated French poet; and the invention, though perhaps in its very origin inclining towards the abuse to which it was afterwards carried, was unexpectedly adopted by the austere Calvin, and introduced into the Geneva discipline. It is indeed strange, that while he was stripping religion, not merely of its pageantry, but even of its decent ceremonies, that this levelling reformer should have introduced this taste for *singing* Psalms in opposition to *reading* Psalms. "On a parallel principle," says Thomas Warton, "and if any artificial aids to devotion were to be allowed, he might at least have retained the use of pictures in the church." But it was decreed that statues should be mutilated of "their fair proportions," and painted glass be dashed into pieces, while the congregation were to sing! Calvin sought for proselytes among "the rabble of a republic, who can have no relish for the more elegant externals." But to have made men sing in concert, in the streets, or at their work, and merry or sad, on all occasions to tickle the ear with rhymes and touch the heart with emotion, was betraying no deficient knowledge of human nature.

It seems, however, that this project was adopted accidently, and was certainally promoted by the fine natural genius of Clement Marot, the favoured bard of Francis the First, that "Prince of Poets, and that Poet of Princes," as he was quaintly but expressively dignified by his contemporaries. Marot is still an inimitable and true poet, for he has written in a manner of his own with such marked felicity, that he has left his name to a style of poetry called *Marotique*. The original La Fontaine is his imitator. Marot delighted in the very forms of poetry, as well as its subjects and its manner. His life, indeed, took more shapes, and indulged in more poetical licences, than even his poetry: licentious in morals; often in prison, or at court, or in the army, or a fugitive, he has left in his numerous little poems many a curious record of his variegated existence. He was indeed very far from being devout, when his friend the learned Vatable, the Hebrew professor, probably to reclaim a perpetual sinner from profane rhymes, as Marot was suspected of heresy, confession and meagre days being his abhorrence! suggested the new project of translating the Psalms into *French verse*, and no doubt assisted the bard; for they are said to be "traduits en rithme Français selon la verité Hebraique." The famous Theodore Beza was also his friend and prompter, and afterwards his continuator. Marot published fifty-two Psalms, written in a variety of measures, with the same style he had done his ballads and *rondeaux*. He dedicated to the King of France, comparing him with the royal Hebrew, and with a French compliment!

> Dieu le *donna* aux peuples Hebraïques
> Dieu te *devoit*, ce pense-je, aux Galliques.

He insinuates that in his version he had received assistance.

> "——— par les divins esprits
> Qui ont sous toy Hebrieu langage apris,
> Nous sont jettés les Pseaumes en lumiere
> Clairs, et au sens de la forme premiere."

This royal dedication is more solemn than usual; yet Marot, who was never grave but in prison, soon recovered from this dedication to the king, for on turning the leaf we find another, "Aux Dames de France!" Warton says of Marot, that "he seems anxious to deprecate the raillery which the new tone of his versification was likely to incur, and is embarrassed to find an apology for turning saint." His embarrassments, however, terminate in a highly poetical fancy. When will the golden age be restored, exclaims this lady's Psalmist,

> "Quand n'aurons plus de cours ne lieu
> Les chansons de ce petit Dieu
> A qui les peintres font des ailes?
> O vous dames et demoiselles
> Que Dieu fait pour estres son temple
> Et fuites, sous mauvais exemple
> Retentir et chambres et sales,
> De chansons mondaines ou sales," &c.

Knowing, continues the poet, that songs that are silent about love can never please you, here are some composed by love itself; all here is love, but more than mortal; Sing these at all times.

> Et les convertir et muer
> Faisant vos levres remuer,
> Et vos doigts sur les espinettes
> Pour dire saintes chansonettes.

Marot then breaks forth with that enthusiasm, which perhaps at first conveyed to the sullen fancy of the austere Calvin the project he so successfully adopted, and whose influence we are still witnessing.

> O bien heureux qui voi pourra
> Fleurir le temps, que l'on orra
> Le laboureur à sa charrue
> Le charretier parmy la rue,
> Et l'artisan en sa bostique
> Avecques un Psaume ou cantique,
> En son labeur se soulager;
> Heureux qui orra le berger
> Et la bergere en bois estans
> Faire que rochers et estangs
> Apres eux chantent la hateur
> Du saint nom de leurs Createur.
> Commencez, dames commencez
> Le siecle doré! avancez!
> En chantant d'une cueur debonnaire,
> Dedans ce saint cancionnaire.
> Thrice happy they, who may behold,
> And listen in that age of gold!
> As by the plough the labourer strays,
> And carmen mid the public ways,
> And tradesman in his shop shall swell
> Their voices in Psalm or Canticle,
> Singing to solace toil; again,
> From woods shall come a sweeter strain
> Shepherd and shepherdess shall vie
> In many a tender psalmody;
> And the Creator's name prolong
> As rock and stream return their song;
> Begin, then, ladies fair! begin
> The age renew'd that knows no sin;
> And with light heart, that wants no wing,
> Sing! from this holy song-book, sing!

This "holy song-book" for the harpischord or the voice was a gay novelty, and no book was ever more eagerly received by all classes than Marot's "Psalms." In the fervour of that day, they sold faster than the printers could take them off their presses; but as they were understood to be *songs*, and yet were not accompanied by music, every one set them to favourite tunes, commonly those of popular ballads. Each of the Royal family, and every nobleman, chose a psalm or a song, which expressed his own personal feelings, adapted to his own tune. The Dauphin, afterwards Henry II., a great hunter, when he went to the chase, was singing "*Ainsi qu'on vit le cerf bruyre*," "Like as the hart desireth the water brooks." There is a curious portrait of the mistress of Henry, the famous Diane de Poictiers, recently published, on which is inscribed this *verse of the Psalm*. On a portrait which exhibits Diane in an attitude rather unsuitable to so solemn an application, no reason could be found to account for this discordance; perhaps the painter, or the lady herself, chose to adopt the favourite Psalm of her Royal lover, proudly to designate the object of her love, besides its double allusion to her name. Diane, however, in the first stage of their mutual attachment, took "*Du fond de ma pensée*, or "From the depth of my heart." The Queen's favourite was—

Ne vueilles pas, o sire,
Me reprendre en ton ire.

that is, "Rebuke me not in thy indignation," which she sung to a fashionable jig. Antony, King of Navarre, sung, *Revenge moy prens la querelle*, or, "Stand up, O Lord, to revenge my quarrel," to the air of a dance of Poitou. We may conceive the ardour with which this novelty was received, for Francis sent to Charles the Fifth Marot's collection, who both by promises and presents encouraged the French bard to proceed with his version, and entreating Marot to send him as soon as possible *Confitemini Domino quoniam bonus*, because it was his favourite Psalm; and the Spanish as well as French composers hastened to set the Psalms of Marot to music. The fashion lasted, for Henry the Second set one to an air of his own composing. Catherine de Medicis had her Psalm, and it seems that every one at court adopted some particular Psalm for themselves, which they often played on lutes and guitars, etc. Singing Psalms in verse was then one of the chief ingredients in the happiness of social life.

The universal reception of Marot's Psalms induced Theodore Beza to conclude the collection, and ten thousand copies were immediately dispersed. But these had the advantage of being set to music, for we are told they were "admirably fitted to the violin and other musical instruments." And who was the man who had thus adroitly taken hold of the public feeling to give it this strong direction? It was the solitary Thaumaturgus, the ascetic Calvin, who, from the depth of his closet at Geneva, had engaged the finest musical composers, who were, no doubt, warmed by the zeal of propagating his faith, to form these simple and beautiful airs to assist the Psalm-singers. At first this was not discovered, and Catholics, as well as Huguenots, were solacing themselves on all occasions with this new music. But when Calvin appointed these Psalms, as set to music, to be sung at his meetings, and Marot's formed an appendix to the Catechism of Geneva, this put an end to all Psalm-singing for the poor Catholics! Marot himself was forced to fly to Geneva from the fulminations of the Sorbonne, and Psalm-singing became an open declaration of what the French called "Lutheranism," when it became with the reformed a regular part of their religious discipline. The Cardinal of Lorraine succeeded in persuading the lovely patroness of the "holy Song-book," Diana de Poictiers, who at first was a Psalm-singer and an heretical reader of the Bible, to discountenance this new fashion. He began by finding fault with the Psalms of David, and revived the amatory elegances of Horace; at that moment even the reading of the Bible was symptomatic of Lutheranism; Diana, who had given way to these novelties, would have a French Bible, because the Queen, Catherine de Medicis, had one, and the Cardinal finding a Bible on her table, immediately crossed himself, beat his breast, and otherwise so well acted his part, that "having thrown the Bible down and condemned it, he remonstrated with the fair penitent, that it was a kind of reading not adapted for her sex, containing dangerous matters; if she was uneasy in her mind she should hear two masses instead of one, and rest content with her Pater-nosters and her Primer, which were not only devotional, but ornamented with a variety of elegant forms from the most exquisite pencils of France." Such is the story drawn from a curious letter, written by a Huguenot, and a former friend of Catherine de Medicis, and by which we may infer that the reformed religion was making considerable progress in the French court,—had the Cardinal of Lorraine not interfered by persuading the mistress, and she the king, and the king his queen, at once to give up Psalm-singing and reading the Bible!

"This infectious frenzy of Psalm-singing," as Warton describes it, under the Calvanistic preachers had rapidly propagated itself through Germany as well as France. It was admirably calculated to kindle the flame of fanaticism, and frequently served as the trumpet to rebellion. These energetic hymns of Geneva excited and supported a variety of popular insurrections in the most flourishing cities of the Low Countries, and, what our poetical antiquary could never forgive, "fomented the fury which defaced many of the most beautiful and venerable churches of Flanders."

At length it reached our island at that critical moment when it had first embraced the Reformation; and here its domestic history was parallel with its foreign, except, perhaps, in the splendour of its success. Sternhold, an enthusiast for the Reformation, was much offended, says Warton, at the lascivious ballads which prevailed among the courtiers, and with a laudable design to check these indecencies, he undertook to be our Marot—without his genius; "thinking perhaps," says our cynical literary historian, Antony Wood, "that the courtiers would sing them instead of their sonnets, *but did not*, only some few excepted." They were practised by the puritans in the reign of Elizabeth; for Shakespeare notices the puritan of his day "singing Psalms to hornpipes," and more particularly during the protectorate of Cromwell, on the same plan of accommodating them to popular tunes and city feasts; soldiers sang them on their march and at parade; and few houses, which had windows fronting the streets, but had their evening Psalms; for a story has come down to us, to record that the hypocritical brotherhood did not always care to sing unless they were heard!

WONDERFUL PERFORMANCE.—Mrs. Grey, in her novel, *Good Society*, just published, gives the following sketch of the performances of an amateur, which must have been indeed "stunning:"—"It was on an improved harmonium that had recently arrived from town. There was no mistaking that pale, spiritual face, noble figure, and intellectual head. The performer was the Rev. Emanuel Mordecate. There were several *other ladies* in the room, as well as Lord Clarence Leigh, who sat near his tutor, but all had equally surrendered themselves to the charm of that skilful performance. It was wonderfully clever, exhibiting a talent that possessed as prominently the force of genius as the freshness of novelty. It was a voluntary, but made up of reminiscences of the *chef d'ouvres* of the greatest composers of various schools. Sometimes a burst of grand harmony was followed by a phrase of the tenderest melody; sometimes a skilful series of the most striking modulations introduced an air as marvellous for its sweetness as for its simplicity; and presently the grand *motivo* of a triumphant march preluded the touching wail of a funeral dirge. The performer seemed equally familiar with every species of composition from the most simple *aria* to the most intricate fugue, and equally familiar with every master from the quaint exercises of Scarlatti and Palestrina, to the most scientific studies of Sebastian, Back and Hummel. Now he impetuously burst forth with one of the grandest choruses of Handel, then lingered lovingly over a *solemn scherzo* by Mozart or Beethoven. Hardly had he done with the classical spirit which breathed throughout the master-pieces of Glück and Winter than he was as thoroughly master of the romance that prevailed in the more poetical productions of Mendelssohn and Schubert. There was a marked feature in the performance though it seemed as many-hued as the prism, this was the constant recurrence to themes of a devotional character. However secular might be the associations connected with many of the compositions, the manner in which the performer dwelt on some of the finest examples of church music, used in the Romish service, showed that he played with a higher object than to amuse."

QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER FRACTIOUS ORGANIST.—Dr. Christopher Tye, organist of Elizabeth's Chapel Royal, was more correct and delicate in his ear than in his temper; and his disposition, as may be supposed, was not improved by age. It once happened, in his latter days, that the Queen's taste was so little gratified by the peevish old gentleman's performance, that she sent the verger up to the organ-loft, to tell him that he played out of tune; upon which, after uttering the word *pooh!* he sent down for answer, that her Majesty's *ears* were out of tune.

REVIEWS.

VOCAL.

[AUGENER & Co.]

Thoughts of the Past. Song. Written by EDWIN CLARK. Composed by W. SEYMOUR SMITH.

Rather a pretty melody, in F, badly arranged, and unnecessarily preceded by a misty bit of recitative, in F minor. The B flat to the word "its" in the phrase "all its fair promise," would be much better — and, indeed, ought to be — made natural. The words are pleasing, with the exception of a ridiculous bathos about the singer weeping on the beach. "And the tear and the ocean (says Mr. Clark) were one." Of course they were, and what of it?

[CHAPPELL & Co.]

My God, my God, look upon me. Sacred Song. By W. W. WOODWARD, Organist of St. Maries', Derby.

Mr. Woodward has taken considerable pains with this song, which is, in reality, a psalm, and we could have wished that he had avoided a few inelegancies which occur in the accompaniment. For instance, in the symphony, at page 3, there is a glaring case of consecutive fifths, which might easily have been avoided—although we are aware that some musicians do not consider the license very unpardonable.

[FOSTER & KING.]

"*Can'st thou forget the Past.*" Ballad. Written by W. F. R. Composed by JOSEPH F. DUGGAN.

This is an elegant composition for contralto—a flowing and pathetic melody in 2-4 time (B flat), accompanied in a masterly manner, such as we should like to see more frequently displayed in the pianoforte part of our modern ballad school. It is with regret we see Mr. Duggan's music ennobling such contemptible trash as the words of W. F. R. It is time, indeed, that critical journals set about vindicating the literary character of the *libretto*, whether it be grand opera or a simple song such as the present. We shall take an early opportunity in *The Orchestra* of entering more fully on this really important question; in the meantime we beg attention to the following jumble of metaphor, here supposed to be poetry:—

"The wing of care,
Hath not a feather left,
Upon the tomb where dead hopes lie,
Like rose leaves bloom bereft.

Feathers—tombs—rose leaves—what *does* it all mean? Then again:—

This life is like a stream
With flowers dressed,
On which the soul drops gently down,
All garlanded to rest!

After perusing this verse, the only distinct impression left us is—that the soul must feel flowery, but damp.

"*Sweet and Low.*" Four-part Song. By J. BARNBY.

A pretty, and, when well sung, effective part-song, with a slight tendency on the part of the composer to ramble among divers keys.

"*Evening now soft rapture brings.*" Six-part Song. By J. F. DUGGAN.

This is a clever and, in many respects, original work. It will be found difficult to sing, on account of the profuse modulations and the cross accentuation adopted throughout. We notice one or two minor blemishes, which Mr. Duggan should see rectified, *e.g.*, third bar, first page, the third is omitted in the accompaniment; and on page nine, seventh bar (tenor part), the result of the B natural not following the B flat in the same part is harsh. As in all that Mr. Duggan writes there is thought and care discernible throughout this part-song, which is recommended for study.

"*Autumn's Treasures.*" Four-part Song. By J. G. CALLCOTT.

Very pretty, and effective. In bars 11 and 12 the melody is unfortunately identical with the commencing passage of the well-known Scottish air, "Welcome Royal Charlie." The writing, however, is in every respect tasteful and musician-like. Though the accompaniment is only intended to assist the voices in practising, we would recommend Mr. Callcott to simplify it, as in many places the passages are nearly impossible to play; although the author's aim is evident—viz., to show the progression of the parts.

[Cramer, Wood & Co.]

"*Leah's Song.*" Written by Henry Farnie. Composed by Brinley Richards.

In the powerful drama of "*Leah*," rendered so popular by the acting of Miss Bateman as the heroine, at the Adelphi Theatre, a Jewish maiden pledges her troth to *Rudolph*, a Christian, and for him leaves her people. *Rudolph* believes a cruel calumny against *Leah*, and, throwing her off, marries another. Years afterwards, *Leah*, broken-hearted, renounces her cherished vengeance, and returns, a weary-footed wanderer, only to die in *Rudolph's* arms. That a subject like this offers many situations for dramatic music there can be no doubt; and we have reason to believe that one of our most talented living composers is at present engaged in an opera founded upon this story. Meanwhile, we have here a song, supposed to be sung by *Leah*, in her despair, not unmingled with the sad hope that she will, at least, breathe her latest sigh on her lover's breast. We have not the slightest doubt that it will become immensely popular, not only on account of the words and the music, which are charming, but partly, also, on account of the interest of the subject. The song is embellished by a beautiful portrait, in which every one who has once seen her will immediately recognise the noble features of Miss Bateman. The music is in the key of E flat, never extending beyond the two E's that form the octave, thus adapting itself to any voice.

"*The Angel's in the House.*" Words and Music by George Linley.

A pretty little song, in Mr. Linley's most fluent manner; easy to sing, and easy to play, with words of an unexceptionable sentiment. Key, A flat major; compass, C to E flat.

[We have also received the following pieces published by D'Almaine & Co.]:—

"*He Sleeps in the Depths of the Sea.*" Song. Written by the Rev. J. Brock, B.A. Composed by James Robinson.

"*Pray call again and ask.*" Written and composed by J. Robinson; and

"*Where shall we wander?*" Vocal Duet. By the same.

INSTRUMENTAL.

[J. H. Jewell.]

"*Trois Bagatelles.*" *Transcrites pour le Piano. Composées par* J. Mac Kewan.

We do not know from what other arrangement these little pieces are transcribed; we should have imagined them to be originally composed (as here they are arranged) for the pianoforte. They are a very fair specimen of the author's talent, showing both taste and knowledge. We prefer No. 2, on account of its being more decided in character, and more satisfactorily treated than its companion numbers. The whole set is of average difficulty, and may safely be recommended to professors.

Musical Illustrations to "Ion." Prayer and March from 5th Act. Arranged for four hands, by J. Mac Kewan.

We can scarcely judge of what the remainder of the music to "*Ion*" may be like, from the two very short movements, for they do not offer very much that is new or in any way striking. We should be glad to become acquainted with all the music from this work, before attempting to judge of its merits.

[Ashdown & Parry.]

"*Spray of the Ocean.*" *Bluette pour Piano. Par* Henry F. Parker.

This piece has not the slightest pretension to novelty, but its passages lie very conveniently for the hand, and will give little trouble to any one who has studied Lezaracy. It belongs to that most recent of modern styles, the "music of the elements," affecting to a class of amateurs whom only "a flash of lightning," a "dancing sunbeam," "drops of water," "golden snow-flakes," or pieces with similar titles, can satisfy. What a caricature upon this class of music would a piece be, entitled "A thick fog!" The absence of anything like feature or point suggests Albert Smith's anecdote of the amateur photograph of Cologne Cathedral.

[Duncan, Davison & Co.]

"*Souvenir de la Pologne.*" *Mazurka de Salon. Transcrite par* Charles Edwin Hirst.

This is a pretty, facile, drawing-room piece, neatly written (in D flat), by Mr. Hirst, and inscribed by him to W. S. Collard, Esq. The Polish 'tone' is well sustained in the work.

[Cramer, Wood & Co.]

"*Trust me.*" Melody for the Pianoforte. By Arnold de Foe.

Is a perfect little gem. We say *little*, because it extends over two pages of music only; but it is little in no other way. In the true sense of the word, it is a "melody;" sweet, flowing, original, easily remembered, and touchingly beautiful. It is in the key of C major, 3-4 time, by no means difficult to play, and yet interesting, even for an accomplished performer. There can be no doubt of its being destined to rival in popularity the universally admired, but musically inferior, "*Ecoutez moi.*"

"*La Foi.*" *Melodie* and "*Les Ailes*" *Caprice. Par* J. Blumenthal.

Both these compositions are above the average of Herr Blumenthal's pieces, accustomed even as we are to receive nothing from his pen that has not elegance and taste. "*La Foi*" is a melody in E flat, marked *andante espression*, and extremely graceful it is. It is arranged that the melody is played by the second and third fingers of the right hand, in the middle (tenor part, as it were), while the accompaniment extends above and below it, encirling it, as it were, with harmony, the left hand adding the basses, in long, sustained octaves; these give a richness and a quiet *substance* to the whole. We notice this particularly, as being a change from that somewhat exhausted mode of singing by means of *the thumb* on the pianoforte. The other piece, "*Les Ailes*," is of a totally different character. Light and airy, with trills, and runs, and arpeggios, and shakes, it carries out the idea of its title most cleverly. It is in C major, with an episode in E flat, that gives both relief and contrast in a most pleasant manner. We may notice in conclusion, that these pieces reflect great credit upon the author, for being *carefully written*, not jotted down, and show the results of study, and a desire to be correct, in addition to being pleasing; this is worthy of all commendation. In the present day, when an author or composer has once made a success, he is too apt to neglect the higher claims of his art, and to write for writing's sake, and for the profit thereof only; not so Herr Blumenthal. He only speaks to us when he *has something* to say, and then is as careful of "how" it is said as of "what" it is.

Sir Henry Bishop's Melodies—"The Bloom is on the Rye," "My Heart and Lute," "Foresters Sound the Cheerful Horn," "The Tramp Chorus. Arranged for the Pianoforte, by G. J. Skelton.

This is a most welcome addition to the arrangements of the day, many of Sir Henry Bishop's melodies being really beautiful, and quite adapted for pianoforte-transcription. Mr. Skelton has done his work well, and the arrangements before us are in every way recommendable. Professors will find these serviceable, and pupils of average proficiency will delight in them. The variations are well suited to the subjects they illustrate; the passages are convenient for the hand, and of decided effect.

Fatal Melancholy of Jeremiah Clark.—Jeremiah Clark, organist of St. Paul's and the Chapel Royal, and who, as an ecclesiastical composer, reflected honour on his tutor, Dr. Blow, and the latter part of the sixteenth century, had the misfortune, early in life, to conceive a partiality for a very beautiful lady, whose pre-engagement rendered his passion hopeless. The sufferings incident to his disappointment became so intolerable, that he resolved to relieve himself by suicide. Returning one day from the house of a friend in the country, attended by a servant, in a fit of melancholy and despair, he alighted, and went alone into a field by the road side, in the corner of which was a pond surrounded with trees. The scene pointing out to him two methods of ridding himself of his miserable existence,—that of suspension, and that of drowning,—he, for some time, hesitated as to the choice he should make. At length, he took from his pocket a piece of money, and tossing it in the air, determined to abide by its decision,—that is, according to the side on which it should fall. The coin pitched on its edge, in that position stuck in the clay, and thus seemed to prohibit both these means of self-destruction. Too resolved, however, to quit a life in which he saw no possibility of happiness, he re-mounted his horse, rode to town, and, a short time after his return, shot himself in his own house in St. Paul's Church-yard.

Musical Longevity.—In February, 1825, Italy lost Signor Galmini, her first tenor vocalist, and leader of the band of Pope Benedict the Fourteenth. This fine singer and distinguished performer on the violin, lived to the very extraordinary age of one hundred and thirty-eight years.

SHEELAH'S LAMENT.

I.

He has left me for ever! the light of my heart!
Yet I spoke not a word when I saw him depart;
I watched him fade out in the shadows of night,
And I cried, as he passed from my tear-be-dimmed sight,—
"Come back, Dennis dear! I've but one word to say—
One word ere we part—part for ever and aye!"

II.

Thou wild rushing Darragh sweep on to the sea,
Thy voice shall no more speak in gladness to me;
The heather may bloom by the paths where we strayed,
And the birds sing of love in Glendarragh's green glade,
I heed not, I hear not, my heart's far away,
With my love that has left me for ever and aye!

III.

At evening and morning I'll sit by the tree,
Where Dennis first whispered his true love to me;
In my thought I will hear his light step on the hill,
And see his bright eyes beaming love on me still;
I'll speak the one word that I tried hard to say
On the night when we parted for ever and aye!

IV.

Oh, Dennis! through life and through death I'll be true
To the vow when I gave my young heart unto you;
We shall yet meet again, when the long years are past,
When the voice of the weeper is silent at last—
And I'll speak the one word that I tried hard to say
When we meet without parting for ever and aye!

R. P. S.

Feuilleton.

AN UNAPPRECIATED STAR.

It is not your privilege, perhaps, to know Mr. Jasper M. Blocombe, of our Muddipolitan Theatre? I do not inquire if your knowledge of the dramatic world takes in the Muddipolitan Theatre itself, because, as a man of the world, you naturally read your *Weakly Indigestor*, which treats of all sorts of dramatic subjects supplied by contributors from the provinces, who are *not* paid. I have it on personal authority from the gentleman who reports for Muddipool—Muddipool, in Slopshire, you know, our town, in fact—and who combines a large experience in dramatic matters with a slight knowledge of the principles of auctioneering, that he is *not* paid for his hebdomadal four pages of closely written note paper to the *Weakly Indigestor*. I mention this because there is a general impression prevalent in Muddipool, that he receives five hundred a year in demi-weekly payments, the remittances arriving Wednesdays and Saturdays, and acknowledgment of receipt with stamp being unnecessary, as between friends, and no questions asked. My friend, however, assures me that this report is totally unfounded; that the payment for his contribution is not in specie, but in privilege, the privilege being that of sitting once a week in the dress-circle of the Muddipolitan Theatre, and afterwards eulogising Mr. Jasper M. Blocombe in the pages of the *Weakly Indigestor*, for, throughout that London organ, it is the business of its correspondents always to praise, never to censure.

Which brings me back to Mr. Blocombe. I should premise that Mr. Blocombe's position in our company is difficult to specify, for Mr. Blocombe's genius is general. You could not call him the leading tragedian, because he sometimes plays *Bob Ticket*; nor could you call him low comedian, because he has done *Hamlet* before now. He is not altogether a walking gentleman, nor yet does he exclusively do the heavy business, though he has been known to play *Hardress Cregan*, the *Red Rover*, and *Slasher* in one night. And I am sure he would be very much offended if you called him an utility actor. I know he would, because he never could bear the slightest imputation on his position from any of our company. I call it "our" company, you observe, though I do not quite act myself—at least, not entirely, though I have been on before now in a pantomime street-scene; but the fact is, my mam—my mother has objected to my going regularly on the stage ever since my eyes became weak, and since I was first obliged to drink so much tea to strengthen my hair.

But I have been singularly fortunate in knowing Mr. Blocombe, who has imparted a good deal

of theatrical information to me, and is very affable, taking porter and borrowing half-crowns quite friendly. I am sorry to find that people don't appreciate Mr. Blocombe as they ought, considering his talent and professional position. His personal appearance is commanding enough, I am sure. He is nearly five feet seven, has long—very long—hair; it comes all down his ears and neck, and so soils his paper collars that he cannot wear one more than three days; and his eyes are round and like some sort of glass inkstands I have seen; and he is always working away with his brows; and when he sneers, as he does if you mention the name of any other actor—oh! my goodness, I would not be sneered at by Mr. Blocombe for a very great deal of money. It is too harrowing.

I find from long and earnest conversations with Mr. Blocombe in retired bars and in billiard-rooms, where the table is of a rugged and insurgent nature, that many men, whom I thought eminent in the profession, are little better than fools, who have no talent at all. I find that there is not a spark of merit in Charles Kean's playing; that Mr. Sothern has no conception of a gentlemanly part; that Mr. Boucicault can neither manage a company nor act an Irishman; that Vandenhoff and Brooke, and Buckstone and Toole, belong to the ruck of the profession. Somebody, who had been to London, once gave me a glowing description of Mr. Fechter in "*The Duke's Motto.*" I submitted the case to Mr. Blocombe, and he undeceived me by proving the somebody to be wrong, and the world to be wrong, as far as a belief in Mr. Fechter goes. Mr. Blocombe will occasionally admit the existence of talent in women, but he totally denies it in male actors, old or young. His sarcasm is dreadful when a star comes down to Muddipool to play a leading part. I then learn how much depravity there is in human and dramatic nature. I hear what vanity, what insolence, what overbearing presumption that star manifests towards Mr. Blocombe and the company, in attempting a part superior to anyone else's. I learn that the star's impudence is unbounded; that on one occasion he actually requested Mr. Blocombe to tone down his vulgarity! *His*—Mr. Blocombe's—vulgarity! His *vulgarity*—the very word, Mr. Blocombe assures me—while playing his part! Of the private life of the star, I learn that he drinks to excess, tells lies, is unfaithful, blasphemes, and is believed to have an hereditary touch of insanity. I find that on Saturday night he was mortally drunk, so much so that he was violently propelled upon the stage, and yet received three calls, while *he*—Mr. Blocombe—had none. In short, I find from Mr. Blocombe's diagnosis of the star, that, like every other star who comes down to Slopshire, or plays in London, his position is a fluke, his talents are nil, his whole character despicably mean.

But while so many ordinary—indeed, talentless—people rise in the profession, I regret to perceive that Mr. Blocombe's abilities are completely ignored. True, he plays all kinds of parts, from the deepest tragedy to the lightest comedy; still he is far from standing so high in Muddipool as he should. I have been accused of too great a partiality for Mr. Blocombe; but if people will go away and refuse to listen whenever I begin to speak about him, how can I prove that I am *not* too partial to him? I admit I think Mr. Blocombe a great actor; but what then? Nobody will allow me to prove it. Still, his acting strikes me as being excellent for several reasons.

If he has to play the character of an aristocratic swell, the glass of fashion and the mould of form, he does so in a pale grey shooting-jacket, shining black cloth waistcoat and trowsers, and white kid gloves. He is particularly graceful in his easy swaying from one leg to another, while speaking, and in his manipulation of his hat. He is very fond of coming on with a hat, for the purpose of putting it on and off with easy negligence. Say the scene is laid in a wood; time of year, January; time of day, 9 P.M. Say Mr. Blocombe, in the character of *Sir Lesters Quaire*, has a mysterious meeting with *Lady Ammonia*, in the wood. Mr. Blocombe's management of his hat is after the manner of the "business" as here set down:—

SIR LESTERS QUAIRE. I have sought you, Lady Ammonia, at this strange hour (*takes his hat off gracefully*), with a defined and present object. Though the hour is unusual, and the place of appointment unfrequented, my untarnished honour (*putting his hat proudly on his head*) must be your ladyship's safeguard. I have lived too long under southern skies (*raising his hat, with an appealing glance to the flies*) to curb the heart's ardour with colder calculation. Ammonia (*whipping his hat rapidly off, and holding it out at the extent of both arms*) I love you—(*remains in that position thirty seconds, then goes on with the scene, with his hat now clasped to his heart*).

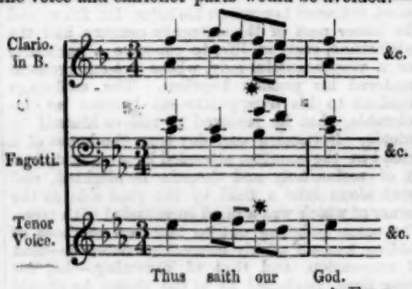
Another point of Mr. Blocombe's elegance is his pleasant little impromptus in the way of gags. When any one else on the stage has a speech to deliver, Mr. Blocombe's extempore comments thereon form a sort of piano accompaniment. His remarks often embody much witticism, and are easy and suggestive of high life. Thus, in a light comedietta or vaudeville, where Mr. Blocombe is an officer and gentleman, he is addressed by the young lady, of whom he is enamoured:—

EMILY. Now listen, Alfred.
(ALFRED. Yes, listen, yes.)
EMILY. My dear uncle has, as you are aware—
(ALFRED. Oh, yes, I am very much aware.)
EMILY. —left me a fortune of £10,000—
(ALFRED. Magnanimous old boy!)
EMILY. —and my free choice of a husband, conditionally, mark—
(ALFRED, *looking about him.* Who's Mark? Where is he?)

And so on through every long speech in the piece. You will observe that this accompaniment is by no means set down in the book; it is entirely Mr. Blocombe's own invention. This habit, and his taste in dress, and his loud and ringing delivery, so loud that every note reaches the remotest corner of the gallery, are sufficiently demonstrative of his talent. To what then are we to attribute the fact that he is not appreciated? Mr. Blocombe kindly furnishes society with an answer to the inquiry. I learn from Mr. Blocombe that it is through professional rivalry he is kept back. There are members of the Muddipool company who exert all their influence with the management to keep him back. There are theatrical managers and metropolitan stars who have an object in keeping him back, their fear being lest he should eclipse the shining planets. Not but what he is known beyond Muddipool—ay, beyond Slopshire, too. It was only last Thursday, I understand, that Mr. Blocombe received a letter from the manager of the T.R., Cork, offering him 15*l.*, and payment of his expenses, for a fortnight's engagement, just to play in front pieces. "Come over, old boy," said the manager of the T.R., Cork, affably, "and play a fortnight—three fivers and a benefit, expenses included, of course." But could he go? The manager of the Muddipool Theatre—*our* manager—being in the plot, refused to allow him. Mr. Blocombe, repressed on all sides, naturally seeks a confidant, and honours me. One opening for his talents is, however, left to Mr. Blocombe. He purposes giving lectures in elocution, of which his experience is profound. I am to become his pupil, for I am accustomed on Sunday evenings to read Mr. Bellew's sermons to mamma—mother; and Mr. Blocombe has shown me how I may greatly improve their delivery.

It is, therefore, with a view to make Mr. Blocombe's peculiar position more generally known, and to remedy the misunderstanding of society towards him, that I venture to address you in his behalf. I have the greatest confidence in the result. Any offers (and they will surely pour in) of engagements from London managers may be directed to Mr. Simon Mildboys, care of Mrs. Mildboys, Muddipool, Slopshire, where they will receive every attention, I am sure, and be carefully submitted to Mr. Blocombe.

QUERY.—I should like to know if, in the accompanying extract from Mendelssohn's "*Elijah*," "If with all your hearts," the ungrammatical writing can be justified, or whether Mendelssohn originally intended it to be sung by a soprano voice, in which case the fifths occurring between the voice and clarionet parts would be avoided:—



A FLAT.

QUEEN ANNE'S SPINET.—Queen Anne, who was instructed in music by Giovanni Battista Draghi, chiefly practised the harpsichord. She had among her keyed instruments a spinet, the loudest, and perhaps the finest, that was ever heard; and which she highly valued. Her Majesty, just before the period of her decease, gave especial direction that this instrument should go to the master of the children of the Chapel Royal, for the time being, and that it should regularly descend to his official successors. Accordingly, it passed first into the possession of that scientific and ingenious musician, Dr. Croft, and afterwards into the hands of Dr. Nares, brother to the judge of that name, from whom it descended to Mr. Gates, and thence to the late Dr. Ayrton.

Foreign.

GERMANY.

Our correspondents (says the *Ménestrel*), confirm the success of the youthful and pretty *virtuose*, Maria Boulay at the Conservatory of Geneva. She is reported to have given several concerts there, and to have acceded to the call of the neighbouring towns, who have also demanded three and four successive concerts.

VIENNA.—In the operatic world nothing of an extensive nature seems to have been done lately. With the exception of a representation of the "*Dumb Girl of Portici*," better known in England as "*Masaniello*," nothing, indeed, *has* been done extensive or inextensive. Herr Wachtel, as *Masaniello*, bemeaned himself well, as, says the *Signale* sarcastically, he always does when he plays a fisherman, a postillion, or any operative part—much better indeed than where a sword, a sceptre, or a bâton is confided to his hands. In concert circles, the music of the future is having its day, or week, for two concerts of this prospectively melodious nature have been given. Liszt, philharmonically inclined, gives us the second instalment of his "*Faust*" symphony, this one being superscribed "*Gretchen*." Now people are beginning to object to this small dribbling out of Herr Liszt's "*Faust*" symphony,—object also to the selection of little tit-bits out of a whole which has undoubted claims on our admiration. Why only "*Gretchen?*" they say. Why not "*Faust*," and "*Mephistophiles*," and the "*Apotheosis*" even, if it comes to that? "*Gretchen*" is sweetly pretty: rich, tender melody, supported by good instrumentation, allegorises the fair *Marguerite* prettily and well. The second concert of the prospective-musical nature gives us Richard Wagner's "*Tristan and Isolde*" and the "Cobbling song of Hans Sachs;" and, from all accounts, the less said about either the better. The grossest materialism in musical things grates harshly throughout the overture to "*Tristan*," and the rest is as bad. As for the "Cobbling song," it is partly low and vulgar, partly exaggerated in expression, not to speak of the Old-German-Burgherism which should be characterised especially in these songs of crafts. In short, Richard Wagner should confine his talents to the musical illustration of dramatic subjects, for which he is evidently more fitted than for preaching the gospel of the future, a lyrical gospel to be founded on the destruction of all things beautiful, and the boundless impotence of creation generally. ——M. Ernst Pauer has appeared with considerable success at Laub's latest quartett soirée in Vienna, to which he contributed Mendelssohn's "*variations sérieuses:*" he purposes giving several concerts there. ——Laub himself has taken leave of the Vienna public, and joins Carlotta Patti in a musical tour.

LEIPSIC.—The twelfth concert has been given in the Gewandhaus, and Mdlle. Orgeni, a pupil of Viardot Garcia's, made her *début*. Mdlle. Orgeni's voice, a soprano, is not without fulness, and wants neither execution nor expression, but her vocal education seems unfinished, and her intonation indistinct. A warm reception was accorded to the *débûtante*, and her entrance upon the lyrical stage has been successfully made. Madame Ingeborg von Bronsart's appearance as pianiste was equally successful, and her execution, which has been gained by long experience, and no ordinary personal talent, earned frequent applause.

COLOGNE.—Madame Clara Schumann gave a *soirée musicale*, on the 7th inst., in the Hotel Disch, assisted by M. Ferdinand and Mdlle. Daberkow.——Through the Theatrical Savings Association, over 1,000 thalers have been drawn for M. Ernst, theatrical manager; but with 1,000 thalers there is little to save in theatrical matters.

BERLIN.—The traffic in tickets at second-hand has attained such magnitude in Berlin that not a ticket for any theatre can be had at the original price. The police are really commencing to be serviceable in putting down the street trade in tickets. The licensed ticket-sellers are now only allowed to vend their wares in shops, and not, as before, to cry them through the thoroughfares, and before the theatre-doors. When this order is regularly enforced, the ticket-trade must cease. Hitherto, the daily profit of one of these hawkers has averaged often fifteen thalers, or forty-five English shillings.

The most popular thing of its kind in Prussian musical circles as an inedited concert-piece, is the grand duet on the motives of "*La Juive*," composed and executed by Messrs. Dierner and Sarasate. There will soon be several good classical transcriptions by Demier (says *Les Ménestrel*), and a remarkable *fantasie* by Sarasate on Gounod's "*Faust*."

FRANCE.

A Conservatory of Music is now building at Nimes, one of the most musical towns of the south of France.

The church of St. Andrew, at Lille, has been enriched by a large organ, the inauguration of which took place in the character of a musical solemnity.

Mdlle. Marie Darjon is to give her grand orchestral concert in the Salle Herz, the last week of January. Among other *morçeaux*, she will execute E. Prudent's last work, the "*Trois Rêves*."

PARIS.—Two new theatres have been established—apparently an early ripening of theatrical freedom. One is called "the Theatre of Good Taste," situate on the Quai Voltaire. Thus runs its motto:—"The mother will be enabled to bring her daughter hither without danger, eat bons-bons, and yawn in the circle of her family." The programme promises "comedies from Aristophanes, member of the Grecian Institute; operas from Gluck, soloplayer of the Pasdeloup concerts; and tragedies from the celebrated Sophocles, member of the Literary Society, and Chevalier of the Legion of Honour."——Great was the rush to "*Moses*," on Monday week, and great was the admiration with which "*Moses*" was received, after M. Warot's eight days' illness. So great indeed the rush and the admiration, that seats have been engaged on the first day for the tenth representation in advance. Well, M. Warot has deserved his success, for he sings better than before; his indisposition and everything else notwithstanding. M. Obin seems insufficient for the part of *Moses*, in a vocal sense; but his magnificent *physique*, and his *belle tenue*, make up for all. Mdlle. Taisy progresses, and deserves the praise bestowed on her: Faure is also highly commendable. But all the success of "*Moses*" is due to Mdlle. Marie Battu. All Paris knows the effect of her first appearance; and the succeeding ones have been no less successful. Why does she not come out in opera? Her talents would secure her the first place.——Some of the Parisian journals—especially a musical one of some influence—are more than ordinarily severe on both the Pattis, Carlotta and Adelina. The latter, you must know, is here—hopefully, to continue her English success in "*Sonnambula*." It is the opinion of a cotemporary that her star had already begun to pale last season in London; an opinion of the truth of which your readers can best judge. The same journal maintains that all accounts from New York and London are far from confirming the success of Carlotta, "the sister of the charming but rather overdone Adelina." It is a badly-regulated instrument, (I quote our friend's words, not my own), whence there escape now and then some surprising notes, which have neither head nor tail! Certainly the means adopted by M. Ullmann, Carlotta's *entrepreneur*, to ventilate her name and fame, are somewhat worthy your Londonian system of posters in crinky-cranky letters considerably larger than life. M. Ullmann, however, does not post; he sends *dépêches* to the newspapers, advertising in large capitals, "Phenomenal talent and voice, immense success, without example!" And hereat our musical cotemporaries are very bitter.——The Bouffes has been re-opened with great *éclat*. It is now the prettiest, *coquettest*, best-ventilated, and most elegant little place imaginable—no, not exactly little, for you might, if you were the *direction*, stow twelve hundred people on its comfortable benches. There are eight orchestral rows, three tiers of boxes and gallery, a large perystile, whence ascend two broad staircases to the *salle*, which is enlivened with paintings and decorations of the most dazzling and French description. On the opening night, a musical piece was produced, entitled, "*Tradition*," a poetic, stanzaic, couplety, lyrical, *pièce d'ouverture*; the music by Delibes, the "poem" by Henri Derville. Then came a "conversation," called "*Lischen et Fritzchen*," Lizzy and Fred, as you might Anglicise it. Musical of course: for what would the Bouffes be without its trifles of this kind? The individual one is very pleasing, witty, lively, *plein de cœur*, with pretty music, the whole being a light morsel lightly played. Offenbach supplies the music; and Offenbach surpasses himself in "*L'Amour Chanteur*," in which a quartett in excellent style, a very witty duet, and another scenic duet, recal the best morsels of the Opera-Comique.

ITALY.

TURIN.—Gounod's "*Faust*" was brought out here on the 5th. The whole criticism of the press may be summed up epigrammatically—instrumentation fine and rich, melody little. It has been carefully produced, however, and is as carefully played. The part of *Marguerite* is filled by Mdlle. Vandenharste, whose success is unqualified.

TRIESTE.—An unfortunate accident happened here during the repetition of a ballet at the Communal Theatre. A young *danseuse*, named Lucia Padovan, while dressing in her own room, set fire to her clothes, and, rushing terrified in search of help, she communicated the flames to two of her companions. Happily, the fatality has not extended to the last two; but Padovan is dead. So melancholy an event has caused a great sensation, and a large crowd attended the funeral. The coffin, preceded by a military band and choristers, was borne by dancers, surrounded and followed by the *corps de ballet*, torch in hand, including the excellent *danseuse*, Pocchini. All the company of the theatre and a large number of subscribers followed, in the midst of a crowd of sympathisers. Were it not that the subject is too grave, and the misfortune too pitiable to evoke anything but sorrow, there was something ludicrous in this mummery of ballet-dancers, choristers, and torches round the corpse of one poor girl. How much of the feeling exhibited by the "crowd of sympathisers" was called forth by the dancers and the torches rather than by any healthy sorrow for the martyrdom of the *danseuse!* Who shall say?

RUSSIA.

The Imperial Theatre of St. Petersburgh has produced a new ballet on an immense and luxurious scale, called "*The Belle of Libau; or, the Genius of the Mines.*" Little originality is manifested in the composition, but the details have been artistically carried out by M. Petifa. Madame Petifa figures prominently in the ballet, the object of which is evidently to exhibit her grace and elegance in the most attractive manner.——The first concert of the Russian Society, under the direction of Rubenstein, produced a good programme, including the overture *entr'actes* and choruses of "*Manfred*," by Schumann, the overture of Litoff's "*Girondius*," the cavatina from "*Faust*," the Seventh Symphony of Beethoven, and several others.

HOLLAND.

Ferdinand Hiller, the maestro, whose opera of "*The Catacombs*" has just achieved brilliant success at Rotterdam, has received a crown of laurels from the amateurs of the city.

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

After ten consecutive representations of the "*Sicilian Vespers*," Madame Tedesco has sung in "*Sapho*," at San Carlos, Lisbon.

The composer and pianist, Gennaro Perelli, just now in Spain, has been nominated officer of the Order of Catholic Isabella.

AUSTRALIA.

We extract the following from the *Telegraph*, referring to Mr. and Mrs. Kean's engagement in Melbourne:—The weather has to a considerable extent interfered with the theatre-going and amusement-loving portion of the population. Despite these drawbacks, and the raising of the prices, the Keans have created quite a furore, and the theatre has nightly been crowded to excess. In one week over fifteen hundred pounds was received for admission, a sum never before equalled in the colonies. Their receptions have been most enthusiastic, and it is scarcely necessary to say that both Mr. and Mrs. Kean have more than fulfilled the eulogistic opinions entertained of them by English critics. They closed a most successful season on Saturday evening last, and left on the following Monday for Sydney. On their return they will visit the goldfields, and in all probability Tasmania and Adelaide. Since his arrival in the colony Mr. Kean's health has been much improved; they will, it is said, remain several months here. At the other Melbourne theatre, Mr. Barry Sullivan, the lessee, has been bidding high for popularity, has been running the same pieces as those in which the Keans have been performing, and has thus challenged criticism—which, on the whole, has not been favourable.

COVENT GARDEN OPERA HOUSE.

To the Editor of *The Orchestra*.

SIR,—A rumour is gaining ground in town that Mr. Gye intends keeping his house in his own hands next season, with the intention of himself carrying out English Opera. Now, it was generally understood that the English Opera Association, limited, had effected a provisional arrangement with Mr. Gye, by which they would open at Covent Garden. I wish to ask, through your columns, what is the real state of matters? Mr. Alfred Mellon is stated to have been engaged by the Association—but where is the theatre to be, if not Mr. Gye's? I do think that confidence would be more engendered as to the Association's doings, and a feeling of satisfaction more largely displayed, if an authoritative statement was promulgated as to the bearing of things.

FOOT-LIGHTS.

AUBER'S NEW OPERA.

En attendant the music of "*La Fiancée du Rio de Garbe*," we extract the following account of the opening night of its representation from the *Telegraph's* Paris correspondence of Tuesday last:—"There was a *bal intime* at the Tuileries last night; and to-night the performance at the Opera Comique has been changed, in order that the Emperor and Empress may hear the new opera; the new opera by Auber that is, of which I saw the first representation last night, and which I will endeavour to describe to your readers. The story of "*La Fiancée du Roi de Garbe*" is taken from Boccaccio, and is necessarily coloured rather highly. In fact, I had better state at once, to prevent any one being shocked, that the plot turns entirely on certain kisses given and received, and is, if not improper, osculatory to the extremest degree. *Le Roi de Garbe* is an elderly Eastern potentate, who thinks he has his own way, but is in reality governed by his favourites, and especially by *Figarina*, a young lady, the hereditary Court barber, or, to speak more precisely, barberess. This lady is so beautiful that all the Court are in love with her. The opera opens with a "movement" I never remember to have seen before on the stage. The King is discovered asleep on a sofa, and wakes up with a "sneeze." "What is the news?" is his first question, and then he explains to his valet, who is desperately enamoured of *Figarina*, that there is "no chance for him as his betters have been refused by the hereditary shaveress." The King also deigns to inform his servant that *Figarina* is almost royal, being descended from a female barber. The Kings of Garbe would talk while being shaved, and the men cut them, and as they were forced to behead any who shed royal blood, they took to females as having better nerves and lighter hands, with whom one of his ancestors had contracted a left-handed marriage. "She did not shave with the left hand," adds his Majesty, who then sits down to be shaved, and the opera begins. The King is about to be married to the daughter of the Sultan of Egypt, and is on the point of sending off his cousin and *Figarina* to bring home his bride. A fairy godfather has presented the King with a charmed necklace of thirty pearls, one of which disappears immediately any "undue familiarity"—that is orthodox, is it not?—is shown to the bearer of it. Armed with this talisman, the envoys start for Egypt, and finally set off from there for the Court of Garbe, bringing with them the *fiancée*, decked with the tell-tale necklace. The party soon come to grief, and fall into the hands of a truculent villain of a semi-brigand, semi-piratical character. The princess takes off her necklace, the charm of which is, of course, unknown to any of the party, and gives it to *Figarina* to hide in her pocket. About this time the cousin and envoy falls in love with the princess, and, being an unprincipled young man, proceeds to kiss her in the dark, but catches *Figarina* instead. The brigand falls in love with *Figarina*, and gives her kiss "No. 2," and through love of her liberates the party. Here ended the first act. Act 2 brought the travellers home, and *Figarina*, dressed as a page, gets into a quarrel with a real page, who announces that he and many other pages of the court are in love with *Figarina*, though they have never seen her, and is about to draw her sword when the faithful valet tells the page, "*C'est une femme*;" whereupon his pageship sheathes his sword, and is caught in the act of giving kiss "No. 3" to the bearer of the necklace by his brother pages, who, I regret to say, give kisses No. x, which, as we know, = an unknown quantity. We now present the *fiancée* to the King, who receives her *en grande tenue*, as indeed she herself appears. "But I miss a pearl necklace; perhaps her highness does not think it worthy of her other jewels," says the majesty of Garbe. The *Princess* states that it is more valuable than any other ornament, but, unfortunately, all the pearls but three are lost. King enraged—necklace restored to *Figarina*—and scene closes. Next tableau: I regret to say, that, "through charity," *Figarina* repays a kiss that the page had given her, and gets kissed on her own account by the faithful valet of the 1st act, leaving a balance of one pearl, which she gives *en écrin* to the *fiancée*. Astonished and alarmed by this loss of pearls—"*Perles qui ne se remplacent pas*," says his mourning majesty—the King arranges to make over his *fiancée* to his cousin. The announcement made, the cousin kisses the *Princess*, and the last pearl disappears. When the empty case is opened *Le Roi de Garbe* sillily wishes his cousin joy of the lady he is about to marry, and declares his intention of marrying *Figarina*, who has received all the kisses; and the curtain falls. Is there a moral? Possibly; but I am not much of a deducer. I have told you the

material part of the opera as much as is allowed to us here, where there are no "books of the opera," and we are left to translate the language of song without a dictionary. Now I must speak of the spiritual part, not as a musician, but as an humble individual and dweller for four hours in the tightest of stalls. I think, on the whole, the music of the "*Fiancée*" is charming—not grand—like some parts of "*La Muette*—inferior certainly to many portions of "*Fra Diavolo*"—not even, perhaps, so rhythmical as some of Auber's lighter music. Do we not remember "*La Lac des Fées?*" Yet I think all Paris will be singing that chorus of Pages—a chorus at times without accompaniment—the duo and trio in the tent, and the chorus which, for want of another term, I will call, "of ruffians." The first act was too long, too much talking, too much Scribe, and too little Auber. But the other acts—tableaux they were, and dozens of them—were a great triumph, and everybody regretted that Auber himself did not come forward to receive his well-merited applause. But he did not; only the fat, well-fed man in black, and a white tie, who usually announces the "severe colds" and other disappointments. And so, again, Auber, in his eightieth year, has triumphed on the stage of the Opéra Comique—that stage on which, thirty-four years ago, he produced "*Fra Diavolo.*" "*La Fiancée*" he produced, I think even earlier, and the "*Bronze Horse*" soon after; so to him it is not only a field of battle, but a field of victory. "*La Muette de Portici*" came out first at the Grand Opera in 1828. I can assure you that M. Auber at eighty looks as fresh as many men at sixty, who have never written anything more lasting than an "appeal to electors," and much more fresh than many men of forty whose writing has been confined to autographs on stamped paper.

PROPOSED SITE FOR THE NATIONAL MONUMENT TO SHAKESPEARE.

[There will, no doubt, be a plentiful crop of suggestions as to where the proposed monument should be placed. The following, from a member of the Committee, is among the first-fruits:]—

"In searching for a commanding spot on which to erect a memorial to the 'poet of all time,' the most imposing elevation should be sought, not only in regard to present but to future London, being apart, if possible, from all other monuments, upon some isolated site, visible at the greatest distance to the greatest number, on some mound that, if raised by the hand of man, might be a monument alone. Now, fortunately, such commanding spot is to be found upon national property, and free. In the Regent's Park stands 'Primrose Hill,' a spot secured some twenty years ago to the nation by purchase and exchange for land at Windsor from Lord Southampton and the Provost of Eton—a charming site, 207 feet above the River Thames, recommending itself not alone as the highest base on which to raise a monumental pile, but one that, with but slight adaptation, could be made to form a grand feature of metropolitan improvement, by uniting the 'West-end' with Hampstead, giving to London a grand vista or avenue only to be paralleled by the 'Champs Elysées' at Paris, or some of those remarkable perspectives to be found in the continental capitals. Uniting Portland-place, the Finchley road, and Hampstead Heath, it would afford a direct route to the Botanic and Zoological Gardens, and give the many thousands of visitors to town an object of interest from which, in clear weather, they could see the city, and a panorama of great beauty, Windsor, Harrow, Richmond, Sydenham, Greenwich, Muswell Hill, Highgate, Hampstead, &c.,—places in like manner the monument would be visible from. It is somewhat remarkable that this magnificent promenade, which might appropriately be called 'The Prince of Wales' avenue,' is in a direct line with Regent-street, Portland-place, and could be constructed to the foot of the memorial without the slightest violation of public or private right, or the removal of a tree or shrub of value. The inauguration of the site of the National Monument by Her Majesty and her august son, who could proceed over the space marked out, would be particularly appropriate in a park created by the last Prince of Wales, who, when Regent, gave to London, in connexion with the greatest improvements of the age, a place bearing his name, and places those of the various members of the House of Brunswick."

The above is illustrated, we may notice, with a plan of the hill and adjacent country.

TO THE TRADE.

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The Orchestra:
A REVIEW OF MUSIC & THE DRAMA.

All communications to be addressed to the EDITOR, 201, Regent-street, London, W.

LONDON, SATURDAY, JAN. 16, 1864.

Mr. Elliot Galer has acquired, we believe, the acting copyright of Dr. Duval's new operetta, "*Married Maidens*," recently brought out at Hull, and noticed in *The Orchestra*.

Rossini will complete his 72nd year on the 29th February. From the day on which he was born the illustrious composer has the anniversary of that event only once every four years.

Signor Schira, composer of "*Nicolo de' Lapi*," has nearly completed a new opera on the subject of "*Leah*" (Mosenthal's "*Deborah*"), the libretto by Signor Marcello, editor of the Italian musical journal, *Il Trovatore*.

M. Hector Berlioz's opera "*Les Troyens*" has been withdrawn at Paris—a failure. We hear that the future success of Auber's "*Roi des Garbes*," a notice of the opening representation of which will be found in another column, is at least dubious.

The well known firm of Erard, who have continuously enjoyed the honour of the Royal appointments from George IV. to her present Majesty, have also been recently appointed pianoforte makers to their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales.

Musical gardening for this month comprehends an extensive sowing of lyric seed. Mr. Macfarren's "*She Stoops to Conquer*" has been put in rehearsal at COVENT GARDEN, and, *inter alios*, Mr. Benedict and Mr. Schlœsser have operettas in hand. Mr. Vincent Wallace's next Grand English Opera will be on a Scottish subject, the libretto by Mr. Oxenford. In fact, all our composers are busily engaged.

Mr. G. W. Martin is organising a choir of 1,000 picked voices for the purpose of giving a grand performance of the "*Macbeth*" music, and other compositions connected with the writings of Shakespeare, on the 23rd of April next, the three hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birth. Mr. Martin is also, we understand, arranging for a performance of one of Handel's oratorios in aid of the funds of the National Shakespeare Committee.

The first Orchestral Concert of the Musical Society of London is announced for the 27th inst. The vocalists are Madame Parepa and Mr. Santley, with Miss Zimmerman at the pianoforte. We are promised a novelty in the shape of an overture (*Le Médécin malgré lui*) by Gounod. We trust, at one of the subsequent concerts of this society, Mr. John F. Barnet's symphony may be presented. This composition was listened to with great pleasure at the society's rehearsal of orchestral works, in Hanover-square, a short time ago.

We would call the attention of our readers to the programme adopted by the committee for the celebration of the Shakespeare Ter-centenary in town. We shall have something to say on the matter of the resolutions by and bye; meanwhile, we hope that the very meagre *intentions* therein expressed may be amplified and extended, if not by the committee in chief, at least by committees in union. The idea of a national holiday is commendable; but the proposed way of celebrating that holiday is, at first blush, ridiculous.

Our readers are aware that Gounod's "*Faust*" will be represented at HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE, with Mr. Chorley's English version (written some years ago), and with Mdme. Sherrington, Mdlle. Florence Lancia, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Signor Marchesi in the principal parts. The music allotted to *Siebel* was originally written for soprano, but has been hitherto generally taken by mezzo-soprano, for instance, by Mdlle. Trebelli during Mr. Mapleson's last season. The engagement of Mdlle. Florence Lancia, however, would lead us to suppose that the music of *Siebel's* part will now have its original soprano character restored to it.

It will be observed, from a report elsewhere given in this week's *Orchestra*, that swindling in pianos is by no means on the decline. The instance brought under the notice of the sitting magistrates at Marlborough-street was that of auctioneers exposing for sale pianofortes bearing the forged imprint of respectable firms, who, of course, never manufactured them. The magistrate, very properly, granted summonses against the offenders; who, by way of extenuating their own misdemeanour, asserted that there were "plenty of others doing the same thing." We quite believe the statement; and trust that more of these cases will be brought to light. It is perfectly amazing how gullible the public is with respect to musical instruments, such as pianos and harmoniums. Even people moving in good society, and who ought to know better, are lured on, by tempting advertisements, and low prices, to buy rubbish that no respectable manufacturer would keep in his place—simply because he could not pretend to make them at the money which they sell for. We cannot too emphatically remark on the folly of those who, instead of going to a music warehouse of repute, will rush frantically after cheap bargains, offered by people who have nothing to give by way of guarantee, and of whom the buyers know absolutely nothing. The swindling carried on in pianos has not the auctioneer's room alone for its arena; it prospers in *quasi* private houses, where we know an immense illegitimate trade is carried on both in London and the principal towns throughout the kingdom. It is our intention to give a series of papers in *The Orchestra* on the various ramifications of this important subject, founded on accurate information; which we shall be glad to have supplemented by the experience of any of our friends and readers.

CHAMBER MUSIC.

ONE of the true tests of a musical genius is the faculty of writing chamber music. In its restricted sense the term may be said to comprehend works such as Pianoforte Sonatas, either with or without accompaniments, Trios, Quartets, Septets, etc., for stringed instruments, or string and wind combined, and entirely free from the peculiarities of showy execution. The chamber

composer writes as a musician who feels, within himself, that he has a genius of his own, and a mind improved by the science and art only attained by a diligent study of the works of his predecessors. In writing for the chamber, a composer enters upon one of the most difficult, though interesting, branches of his craft. He must make music: music that is to command respect and attention wholly and solely on its own merits, and those merits are addressed to a comparatively few listeners, and must be produced from a limited range of instruments. Chamber composers, in addition to the above circumscribed scope for their art, are debarred from the employment of effects such as are produced by the variety of colouring which an orchestra affords, and led to rely entirely on their inspiration and scientific acquirements. They have to commence this work by a thorough knowledge that it is not possible for them to excite the whole of the passions by their skill, which must be regarded as appealing only to cultivated musical minds, and that they have the hard task before them of pleasing and interesting the musical student and connoisseur. If we take HAYDN, one of the great quartet writers, and analyse his chamber music, simple as it may sometimes appear, there is a purity and lucidity of ideas which he never seemed to lose sight of, and in his treatment generally, of any subject, it is at once seen that under the most natural themes there is the handwriting of a master deeply read in all the mysteries of his art. His very tranquillity, grace, and sweetness clearly indicate the possession of that genius for which he has been renowned, and prove to any one who thoroughly enters into his style and manner, how much can be effected from the development of a simple and pure form.

That variety is not affected by the restrictions under which chamber-music labours, is evident from a perusal of that class of MOZART'S compositions. Unapproachable as MOZART is in the universality of his musical genius, he is no less so in the character of a chamber composer, and the musical student will do well to study this phase of MOZART'S writing. BEETHOVEN, too, that erratic phenomenon of musical impulse, with all his genius and powers, was one who sedulously cultivated the chamber section of the art. His characteristics forcibly point out the wide field of variety open to the chamber musician. In music of this kind, BEETHOVEN wrote in three distinct styles. The first was on the form of MOZART, but perfectly original. His second manner was entirely his own, and the third period, when he was afflicted with deafness, and his spirits overcast by gloom, is that of the second with one of the most wonderful superstructures of musical thought ever raised by man. Even now the outcry, which was at one time his portion, is not altogether abandoned; but musicians, generally, do comprehend those surprising productions of his pen; and the severe criticism which, during his lifetime, was constantly being repeated, is now, thanks to the diffusion of musical knowledge, and a more thorough appreciation of his greatest manner, rapidly passing away. A musical writer has said, with truth, "When BEETHOVEN does not "wield the strength of a great orchestra in his "instrumental concerted pieces, there is the same "vivid and massive harmony, and the same wild, "unexpected, and startling effects. Mingled with "these there are strains of melody inexpressibly "impassioned and ravishing; strains which do not "merely please, but dissolve in pleasure; which "do not merely move, but overpower with emo-"tion."

That there is a charm in composing for a full orchestra—that to produce an Oratorio, Symphony, or Cantata is the ambition of a young musician—there can be no doubt; nor is the motive, in attacking the highest achievement in art, one to be discredited, but, on the contrary, is worthy of commendation. Still, how much more conducive to genius and hard study it would be if composers more frequently turned their attention to chamber music? In the first place—and a very important consideration it should be for those who have to make themselves a name—there is a chance of their productions being heard, while the greater work may lie buried for years, perhaps for ever, under piles of teaching pieces, ballads and waltzes. In the next place, one who is desirous to know how his talent will be estimated, can do so with comparative privacy; and if his venture be a failure, it will not be likely to be as keenly felt as if, after years of anxiety and trouble to get his larger work before the public, it should prove unsuccessful. Lastly, in relation to art, to write chamber music should be one of the aims of every advanced musician. It would assist every composer to know his *status* as an author, for chamber music must be composed in forms, with genius, scientific knowledge, and is appreciated, at something near its intrinsic value, by those really capable of forming an opinion on its merits. These considerations, and they are worth being considered by all aspiring professors, should carry weight with those of the rising generation. We want more musicians and fewer *artistes*: we want more mind and less mechanism; but the mind must be cultivated. To obtain our requirements we must have, first, recourse to nature. Melody, pure, simple, graceful, and pleasing, is absolutely a necessity. No genius can exist without melody. Talent may. After melody, which is nature, comes refinement, or art. Science and study are the next great requisites, and these, with imagination, form the stock-in-trade of a musical composer. High art, not crudities but genuine music that appeals to generous sympathies, is rare amongst us at present. For the love of that art and its more bountiful development we strongly urge a greater attention to chamber music, feeling convinced that it is one of the best tests of a composer's power, one of the most useful means of musical culture, an inducement to study the best models, and one of the purest pleasures which diffuse joy and happiness.

"A soft and solemn breathing sound
Rose like a stream of rich distilled perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even silence
Was took ere she was 'ware and wished she might
Deny her nature, and be never more
Still to be so displaced."

THE PROVINCIAL DRAMA.

FOR good and for evil we owe much to the provinces. If Liverpool were not, and Manchester did not exist, and Birmingham were but a magnificent abstract, much of England's greatness would be wanting in the matter of docks, cottons, and hardware. Provincial towns — nay, even bucolic regions and remote agricultural districts—have produced some great names in literature, politics and art, and to them we owe the existence of a DUGALD STEWART and a TIM BOBBIN, as, before the beginning of the century, we owed that of a WELLINGTON and a ROSCOE. Great men, by the way, who have accidentally come into the world under provincial circumstances, have certainly remedied the small *lusus naturæ* by conveying their talents to the metropolis; but this follows in the natural order of things. Centralization has a direct onward tendency in our own day—centralization in literary things more than all. Popular magazines commenced in provincial towns are immediately removed to the metropolis, and there published, so soon as their success is established. With the exception of *Blackwood's Magazine*, no monthly of any high standing is now published in the provinces of Great Britain, exclusive of Ireland. Popular books owe their origin to the same centre; popular music, popular dramas, equally so. We are occasionally indebted to remote localities for medical men and merchandise; and curious breeds of cattle are at times cultivated afar off. But, in respect of literature, science, and the arts, London stands pre-eminently the conservatory of genius.

It has been a subject of wonder with many—an accepted fact not to be controverted, and not worthy of wonder with many more — that the stage, dramatic or lyric, flourishes so feebly in large provincial towns. While in London, some two-and-twenty theatres, besides concert-halls innumerable, support themselves with average success, nothing like an equal proportion is found among smaller populations elsewhere. In the majority of cases, a proportionate number even is not attained; and where the number is attained the success is disproportionate. The rule is proved by an exception, the exception being the Prince of Wales' Theatre, in Liverpool. MR. HENDERSON enjoys a degree of perennial popular favour altogether metropolitan in character; but MR. HENDERSON is the one example, a second to which it would be hard to find. Before he revived—or created—theatrical taste in Liverpool, it was with that eminent seaport as with other eminent and ineminent places, where the drama vegetates: a dramatic lethargy reigned on the Mersey; and the laurels were very dry and very withered on the brow of the manager, who monopolised Liverpolitan theatrics. In Manchester, a HENDERSON is needed to imbue the drama with its due vitality. And as we penetrate northward and enter the land o'cakes, a peculiarly Scottish mist envelopes the stage, until "the gloom that saddens heaven and earth" extinguishes the footlights altogether, and leaves MELPOMENE and THALIA playing at blind-man's buff, on a darkened ecclesiastical Parnassus.

In a recent review by a contemporary of the Scotch Mind, a particular feature of the national character was not alluded to—namely, the antagonism of the Mind of Caledonia to the stage. By the stage may be symbolised most things that render life less stern and matter-of-fact, and invest it with some small charm; but it is of the stage alone, distinct and proper, that we wish to speak. The enmity of the Scotch Mind—when pure and unadulterated by Southern contact, and represented, as it properly is, by its theological element—is marked. Scarcely two years ago the Commander of the Forces in Scotland took occasion to designate the British theatre a "den of iniquity." Since that time, and before that time to a period too distant to be calculated, the Scotch Mind, professionally theological, amateur by theological, (in either case invidious and intolerant), has frequently taken occasion to express itself openly against dramatic entertainment, and to express itself more frequently by tacitly discountenancing it by example and influence. Much of the old clerical leaven exists still in the North; and the spirit which once tolerated the stage, when the stage supported the church, when mysteries and sacred dramas flourished under JAMES V., would suppress it now that its influence can no longer be turned to theological account. How far a revival of the miracle-plays and mysteries would bring about a revival of church support; how far the representation of scriptural subjects, such as JOSEPH in the Pit, would be pleasing to SOLOMON in the Boxes, it is impossible to say. In all probability, the return to old customs would fail to propitiate the SOLOMONS of anti-dramatic Scotland, or the REHOBOAMS of the Presbytery, or the JEROBOAMS of the Free Kirk. But it might avail to remind these theocrats—whose theocracy rises in temperature, and attains an unpleasantly high degree about the annual period when dramatic licenses are re-issued—that the stage of former years was much less innocent than it now is; was much more inclined to the travestie of high topics and to the familiarising of people with subjects which should be beyond familiarity; to remind them that the stage is no less a public monitor than the pulpit; a monitor, too, like the pulpit and the press, whose influence may be most healthy or most pernicious, as its guidance is good or bad. What its guidance and influence are at the present day, impartial observers, unimbued with sectarian principles, will best decide. We know that dramatic exhibition has now-a-days nothing in it of an offensive nature; that nothing to shock delicacy or to violate truth is in the life represented on the stage; that there is found an exponent of public taste as also a corrective of public evil; and that enough good sense and decency exist in audiences to check any

tendency to impropriety into which the liberty of the drama might fall. Protestant priesthood would admit this at close questioning. Protestant priesthood, however, fears the effect of the stage as acting, through a people's taste, indirectly on their thought, and as educating the latter into freedom. Freedom of opinion is to be deprecated by Protestant priesthood; the stage, like the press, is an elevator of free opinion; and the syllogism is supplied by the discouragement encountered by the drama in Scotland. Many other causes may contribute to the same result, and one undoubtedly lies in the aversion with which the paying public there regard the outlay of money for amusement of merely an æsthetic nature. Another is the want of public speculators in dramatic matters, or the want of means on the part of such speculators as there are; in the absence of moneyed men, in short, who are prepared to "back up" any likely enterprise in the profession. The two remain then—impecuniosity and Strathbogyism—the want of means, and the want of spiritual liberality—to account for the languishing state of the drama in the North, and the total inappreciation it there experiences. How long this condition of affairs shall last it is difficult to decide, or when a more hopeful era shall set in. In all probability, not until the age of theocratic narrowness has departed, and the sombreness of the surplice ceases to be regarded as heaven's own natural hue; not indeed until the nation, now faintly beginning to think about awakening to a sense of its spiritual bondage, throws it off altogether, and seeks relief. Then may art be expected to arise, and the mimic art among art's many branches. Until that time, we must be content to behold Scotland standing pre-eminently alone in Christendom and wet-blanketdom; to see Edinburgh, with a struggling Theatre Royal, patronised six weeks per annum, and with no single music hall besides; to see Glasgow open a new theatre to replace an old establishment destroyed, and scarcely a soul take the slightest interest in the event, or its result.

ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS.

ENGLISH people are suspicious about Felt Wants. That there are felt wants in every phase and condition of civilised existence, nobody will deny; and of this deficiency in the constitution of things, speculators are for ever taking advantage, or, at least, trying to do so. A virulent church sect get up a little spiteful paper in which to abuse their Christian brethren; and they tell you in their opening number that they are supplying a Felt Want. A new public-house is licensed round the corner, in consequence (say the promoters) of a strongly Felt Want on the part of the neighbourhood. The Felt Want of rapid hair-scrubbing induces somebody to bring out an engine to effect the same. What but the catholically Felt Want of suffering Christendom ever gave birth to the Oxford coats, and Regent collars, and patent perambulators, and the thousand and one amazing inventions of the age? It may be matter for wonderment to the speculative how keenly we feel on the subject of our National wants. Britain groans (*pour ainsi dire*) for perambulators, newspapers, and attire of strange device; nor groans in vain—there is always somebody ready to supply her Felt Want, whatever it may be. Indeed, the supply is generally in excess of the demand; and, so much has this been the case of late in the Felt Want market, that British confidence in new projects and new speculations, is, to say the least of it, shaken. So, when a dramatist, or a lyrical composer, proposes to do for our intellectual destitution what enterprising and imaginative tradesmen are constantly achieving for our material wants, we are sceptical, and somewhat disinclined to believe that we are really so badly off as some interested people would have us believe. This British hesitancy—albeit there are enough and to spare of credulous folk in these realms—is a good thing, and we like it. English Charlataneria, clever and unscrupulous though it be, is not a match in the long run for English Conservatism.

In affairs musical the same rule holds. We will always have pretended reformers zealous in knocking down structures they cannot replace—we will always have Mokannas, prophets of short lived creeds and theories of the divine art. Still, we know of not one department of intellectual activity in which more is to be done, and still more to be attempted, than in music. Here you cannot well have too much innovation, for innovation occasionally suggests originality, and, in these times, right glad are we to find one grain of sound art-wheat in the recurring bushels of chaff. Moreover, humbug in music is not very lasting. Sooner or later the Charlatan is stripped of his jack-pudding vesture, and all his tricks are exposed. The public cease to go to the specious and shallow "entertainment," and the entertainer goes into the Gazette.

In London, the diffidence of the public in new forms of entertainment is perfectly well understood by the particular few who cater for the popular musical taste. They know, better than anybody, that whilst on the one hand the public will not have "Felt Wants" attributed to them, and will not patiently hear anything brought before them, so, on the other hand, that this same inconstant public will not have—to quote a popular saying—too much of a good thing. That is to say, the taste of the higher English musical public is tacitly admitted for the works of BEETHOVEN, MOZART, MENDELSSOHN, etc.; but with this practical rider on the concession, that only certain works of these, and such as these, masters can be safely performed. This creed is all but universal now amongst our concert-givers; and it is truly lamentable to think how much magnificent music, of both ancient and modern masters, lies hidden and neglected beneath this unreasonable conventionalism. It seems impossible to get a good "shift" of artists to execute; but, surely, it is not impossible to get many changes of good music. A searching review of the programmes of so-called "classical" concerts in London, for several years back, would bear out our assertion—which no one in the profession will, we think, controvert—that the selection of works has been limited to a degree. Here, then, is a Felt Want—felt, we are assured, by that considerable musical public who wish to know more of BEETHOVEN than can be gathered from a few well-worn sonatas and symphonies; more of MENDELSSOHN than is at present imparted *per* the pianoforte; more, in fact, of the great masters—and who would like to have that further knowledge imparted in a proper manner, not only by good artists, but exactly in the way the composer meant his works to be rendered. In the case of Beethoven, for instance, this desirable end cannot be properly attained without an orchestra. You may sing BEETHOVEN, and play BEETHOVEN on the pianoforte, or even go the length of a stringed quartette, but the vast ideas of the giant can only be realized in sound by a large orchestra. It is in this point we have not progressed much. When we get a first-rate orchestra together, it is generally for the end of dance music, and not for the conscientious intrepretation of a complete work of a great master. In fact, our classical concerts, so far as orchestral effects are concerned, are very feeble indeed. We have had occasion to praise very frequently in *The Orchestra*, the manner in which the Monday Popular Concerts are carried out. They are very good, and very commendable, so far as they go—but they do not, in our opinion, go far enough. Any effort, therefore, in this direction, is legitimate, and, if properly put forth, is deserving of success. We understand that a series of Orchestral Concerts, to supply the wants we have indicated as existing in the musical system, is about to be instituted by MESSRS. CHAMER and Co., under the name of the "Wednesday Orchestral Concerts." As their name imports, the main feature of these concerts will be orchestral performances. These will comprise, in addition to the usual selection of high art, some entirely new works, or unknown *opera* of masters already celebrated. To carry out this part of the programme efficiently there will be a selected orchestra of sixty or seventy artists of recognised standing, conducted by HERR MANNS, whose ability to take the post we all gladly admit. There will be, in addition, solo vocalists, amongst whom will probably be Mdme. PAREPA and Mr. SANTLEY, and solo instrumentalists, of whom Madame ARABELLA GODDARD, we hope, will be one. The performances will extend through the season, and will take place at St. James's Hall—the first being fixed for Wednesday, the 24th of February next. The series is entitled to be called "popular," as the price of admission begins at one shilling.

We have thus generally indicated the scope of an undertaking which, guaranteed as it is by the name and direction of a musical House of the highest standing, and aiming, as it does, at the performance of an important task, must fairly claim to be removed from the class of frivolous and purposeless speculations. The *vis inertiæ* is too strongly the characteristic of those London Societies who have been by prescription the patrons of high musical art. Vestals, ere now, have forgotten to keep alive the sacred flame committed to their charge; and, assuredly, the light of musical science is, in this country, kept flickering in a very precarious manner. The proposed series of Orchestral Concerts may confer ulterior good on musical art in this country, by infusing new life and vigour into associations which slumber dully on, waking up drowsily once or twice a year, only to fall serenely again to sleep; and if this good work be accomplished, a very great impetus will have been given to the advancement of musical science and art amongst us.

SONGS AND SINGERS.

To the Editor of *The Orchestra*.

SIR,—Doctor Johnson used to ask, "What becomes of all the precocious children?" We may follow up the remark by enquiring, "What becomes of all the songs that are published?" Like those very clever children, who invariably turn out stupid, or disappoint everybody, there is scarcely one song among every thousand printed that lives to enjoy even a moderate share of popularity;—the rest usually find their way, after lumbering the shelves of the music-seller for some time, to the waste-paper buyers; or, like the "Thirty Years' Recollections" of a sapient critic, are doomed "to line the trunk, or wrap the candle."

When Shield and Braham wrote songs, the publishing trade was in a very different state to what it is now; the practice of advertising, puffing, and paying singers, was totally unknown. At the present day, from an over-glut of material in the music market, not only is the advertising medium largely run after, but publishers themselves actually turn penny-a-liners, and write crafty criticisms on the works they print. The following is after the approved West-end recipe:—

"SUMMER CABBAGES" and "WINTER GREENS."—Two new Songs, by BROWN ROBINSON.

Then the fortunate possessor of so much refreshing verdure appends a criticism in this style:

"Summer Cabbages" bid fair to rival in popularity the celebrated song, by the same composer, "Winter Greens." It is a most charming composition, within the compass of ordinary voices, and an especial favourite wherever sung."

Now, what is so plain, so straight-forward, so simple as this? Yet who but the ingenious inventor of this paragraph, who vends the commodity, knows the real truth? It is reserved for the buyers of these summer and winter effusions to discover that they are the only "*greens*" in the business.

Another specious line to the unwary is announced in the advertising columns of the *Times* and other leading journals, that at Southampton, on the 23rd instant, Miss Rosa Matilda Snaffles will sing Longshank Welsh's descriptive ballad, "A scream at sea;" and that Mdlle. Plenipo will repeat Glanderduster's attractive lied, "Sing,

Cock-a-doodle, sing," at Manchester and Sheffield, on the 27th and 29th instant.

Was ever so much care or thoughtfulness displayed towards the good people of Southampton, Manchester, or Sheffield, in ancient days? We fearlessly answer *never;* and the amateur young lady singers of these places will prove decidedly ungrateful, if they omit to order forthwith copies of all these very popular songs.

We have seen lithographed portraits of these distinguished female vocalists, as frontispieces to the compositions alluded to; but, imitating nature so abominably, that actions for damages might very reasonably be instituted against everybody concerned in the perpetration of such caricatures.

It is amusing to notice how, week after week, the same resolute system of puffing by advertisement goes on. This perseverance in keeping works before the public which have no real merit, recalls an anecdote told of Liston, the actor. An author, whose piece had been most unequivocally damn'd, prevailed on Liston, with almost tearful eyes, to go on and announce its repetition. Liston generously consented; but scarcely had uttered the words, "Ladies and gentlemen," when he was assailed with loud cries of "No! no!" "Off! off!" Advancing a little closer to the foot-lights, Liston looked quietly round him—paused—and with a *vis comica*, so peculiarly his own, responded—"Ladies and gentlemen! this piece will *positively* be repeated." The audience laughed and applauded; the author embraced him; and the doomed farce gained life for another night or two.

Let us turn to the singers. It is now their custom, with very few exceptions, to receive so much per copy for singing a song. Let the composition be worthy or worthless—no matter—they sign a hundred copies, which, at sixpence a copy, according to Cocker, would be two pounds ten shillings. Perhaps the architect, the author, the contriver of the work, has received five or ten guineas for the sole and entire copyright, which ends *his* hopes. Not so with the singer; he or she has secured a Royalty, and sits, like an incubus, on the title-page of every song; and hundreds and thousands may find their way into the pockets of vocalists who ought to be content with the terms paid by the various *entrepreneurs* who engage them—pleased to sing any song that can obtain for them the breath of popularity, on which hangs their very being.

For the best songs ever written or composed, which have been the most popular during the last century, we believe that a single shilling never was paid to singers to sing them. We may cite at random the following; and a shoal of others might be enumerated:—"My pretty Jane," "Oh, no! we never mention her," "Thou art gone from my gaze," "Jeannette and Jeannot," "Shells of the Ocean," "Little Nell," "Then you'll remember me," "The light of other days," "Ever of thee," &c., &c.

We shall be glad to see this odious habit of paying singers to sing songs discontinued; there will be fewer ricketty bantlings brought forth, and the temptation to sing a song—sing it and leave it—would, by necessity, be abandoned. Boniface puts over his inn door—

"Good wine needs no bush."

We extend the idea. A good song will find its way without subjecting it to any of those disgraceful conditions which we feel it our bounden duty to reprobate.

TWO-HEADED JANUS.

BALLAD-SINGING DIVINE.—Dr. Richard Corbet, bishop of Norwich, was a great humourist, both in his words and actions. "After he was D.D.," says Aubrey, "he sang ballads at the Crosse at Abingdon. On a market day, he and some of his comrades were at the taverne by the Crosse (which, by the way, was then the finest in England). A ballad singer complained that he had no costume; he could not put off his ballads. The jolly Doctor put off his gowne, and put on the ballad singer's leathern jacket, and, being a handsome man, and having a rare full voice, he presently had a great audience, and vended a great number of copies."

MUSIC.

ROYAL ENGLISH OPERA, COVENT-GARDEN.

Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge and Her Royal Highness the Princess Mary honoured the performance of W. C. Levey's popular operetta, "*Fanchette*," with their especial patronage on Tuesday evening. The Royal visitors remained for the grand pantomime.

ISLINGTON PHILHARMONIC HALL.

An excellent little burlesque sketch, by Mr. G. W. Hunt, entitled, "*Phil-Harmonico: a Love Story,*" was introduced on Monday night by the Sisters Clari and Annie Young, and was well received by a large audience.

MADAME PUZZI'S SOIRÉES.—The first of these entertainments came off on Tuesday evening last, at the HARLEY STREET ROOMS, before as fashionable an audience as London can muster at this season of the year. The artists who appeared were Mesdames Louisa Pyne, Banks, Susan Pyne, and Lascelles; Mr. Swift, Signor Gentili, and Signor Ciabatta. The pianists were Messrs. Francesco Bergen and G. W. Cassius, the violoncello being in the hands of Signor Pezze. Miss Louisa Pyne, who came to the concert after sustaining her part in "*Fanchette*," at Covent Garden, electrified the audience with her ever welcome English ballads. She sang, "Why throbs this heart," from Wallace's "*Desert Flower*," encored, and "The Power of Love," from Balfe's "*Satanella*," besides joining her sister in Auber's exquisite duet, "The Bolers," from "*Les Diamans de la Couronne*," which was quite a treat to all present. Never has this most fascinating composition been given with more "point" and grace than by these highly-gifted sisters. Miss Lascelles, who is fast rising to the position of leading English contralto, had ample room for the display of her truly superb voice in Mercadente's "*Ah, s'estruto*," an air which taxes to the utmost the *agility* of the singer; and this (a quality as rare as it is beautiful in a contralto voice), is one with which Miss Lascelles is particularly favoured. She also joined in all the concerted music, besides uniting with Miss Banks in Berger's new two-part song, "I might hope for comfort yet.' It is a charming duet, in the style of, though not at all borrowed from Mendelssohn's two-part songs, and had full justice done to it by the ladies. Miss Banks gave a chaste reading of Mercadente's Preghiera, "*Ah, negli estreuis istanti*," and Mr. Swift displayed his fine voice in Balfe's French romance, "*Si tu savais.*" Mr. Francesco Berger performed two of his own compositions, "Consolation," and "*Pour la bonne-bouche*," with all the delicacy of touch and refinement of style to which his friends have become accustomed, and modestly declined the decided *encore* obtained in the second piece. Mr. Cassius played Fumagalli's "*Quatono des Puritani*" most successfully, and joined Signor Pezze in Mendelssohn's Variations for violoncello and piano. The concert (which did not commence until 9 o'clock) was one of the most successful that Madame Puzzi has hitherto provided for her large and distinguished circle of friends.

THEATRES.

DRURY LANE.

The new piece produced on Saturday by Mr. E. Falconer, may, if enthusiastic applause during the playing, a reception accorded to Mr. Phelps, and a call for the actor, be any criterion, be accepted as a success. Whether that success is permanent, or is calculated to survive stricter analysis of the loose construction and entire improbability of the play, becomes another question. Mr. Falconer, in the elaboration of his drama, has employed a plot sufficiently involved, and incidents sufficiently romantic, to construct a play of average goodness—certainly of average dramatic effectiveness. But, in many respects, "*Night and Morn*" falls short. It seldom rises to beauty, or even force of language; it attains even less distinctness of action. It is a three-act drama with a perplexed plot, not founded, as has been supposed, on Bulwer's "Night and Morning," but original in design and Falconerian in construction. The first act shows us a dungeon in the duchy of Ferrara, where *Julian de Vivaldi* (Mr. Phelps) has been long imprisoned, and whence, by a stratagem, he manages to escape by filing away the bars of his window. He is then conducted by a messenger to the presence of the *Princess Olympia* (Miss Heath), who has been anxiously awaiting the escape of another prisoner, a young page beloved by her, and imprisoned for the crime of aspiring to her love. In the dark she mistakes *Julian* for the other: and arrangements are entered into for a secret marriage. But the monk, who is to perform the ceremony (Mr. Ryder), proves to be the same that in earlier life wedded *Julian* and another lady, who has now become *Duchess of Ferrara*, by marrying the *Duke* in her belief of her husband's death. Here arrives a complication, and another one turns on the discovery that the *Duchess's* daughter is this same *Olympia*; whereupon *Julian* properly determines on going back to prison in preference to bothering himself with an attempt to elucidate matters, liberty being probably too dear at such a price. Then there is a false friend, *Giacomo* (Mr. Spencer), who betrays everybody and comes to grief, being ultimately consigned to *Julian's* prison, while *Julian* himself assumes the ducal rank, and proclaims immunity to *Olympia* in her matrimonial choice. The part of Mr. Phelps was not a strong one, but he imparted to it a certain degree of quiet sarcastic humour. The *Duchess* was imperiously played by Miss Atkinson, while Miss Heath was also good. Mr. Ryder's *rôle* was very slight: he had little to do except look monastic and speak gravely. After the drama the very effective pantomime proceeds successfully as ever, and fully makes up for any defects or shortcomings of the front-piece. Mr. J. Morris was called upon at the ninth hour, on Monday evening last, to sustain the part of *Ali the Merchant*, in the opening of the pantomime of "*Sinbad the Sailor*," owing to the illness of Mr. Tom Matthews. This gentleman performed the part, although at such a short notice, in a highly creditable manner.

PRINCESS'S.

Mr. Westland Marston's comedy, "*Donna Diana*," "adapted and partly re-written from the Spanish of Moreto," was produced at this theatre on Monday last, with average success. The comedy has great literary merit, but a certain demerit of a practical nature, which, even to a slight extent, must always militate against the success of a work written for the stage. We allude to a want of action and situation; deficiencies to be the more regretted from the elevated tone adopted by Mr. Marston throughout the piece. The refinement of ideas, and elegant manner of expressing them, which the author has always shown in his dramatic efforts, appear most forcibly in the present instance. The mental appetite is nevertheless apt to become cloyed by smooth and polished diction, unless relieved by the more stirring element of what is called "situation;" and there can be no doubt, that the encouragement given to Mr. Marston's comedy would have been in far greater proportion, had the action been less dilatory. The principal interest is embodied in the character of *Donna Diana*; in fact, the other *dramatis personæ*, with the exception of *Perin* and *Don Cæsar*, are so unimportant, that there is little chance of their affording much variety. The purpose of the story is set forth at the beginning; and its development sinks into a duel between the two principals. Though the scenes between *Donna Diana* and *Don Cæsar* contain some beautiful passages, the changes are rung on love, jealousy, and assumed indifference so often that Mr. Marston's piece is exposed to the charge of being too "wordy." *Donna Diana* (Mrs. Hermann-Vezin), daughter and heiress of *Don Diego* (Mr. Hooper), is a man-hater upon principle, having discovered in two previous suitors, a greater solicitude for her ducats than for herself. Three princes, *Don Louis* (Mr. H. Forrester), *Don Gaston* (Mr. David Fisher), and *Don Cæsar* (Mr. Hermann-Vezin), have come to solicit the lovely *Diana's* hand. Of these, *Don Cæsar* is madly in love with her, and is advised by *Perin* (Mr. George Vining), a gentleman of the Court, to assume perfect indifference as the only method of gaining her; this counsel is acted upon. *Diana* cruelly resolves to bring her lover to his feet, for the simple pleasure of showing him her hatred of love and man. To this end she takes *Perin* into her confidence, and manages to secure *Don Cæsar* as her attendant knight at the Masque, in the Palace Gardens. *Don Cæsar*, overcome by his love, and *Diana's* apparent favour, forgets his assumed indifference, and makes a passionate appeal to her feelings. He is at her feet, and she then overwhelms him with scorn and contempt. *Don Cæsar*, insulted and wounded, but still devoted to her, suddenly reviles her for believing him in earnest. From that time her troubles begin. She loves him; seeks opportunities of meeting him, which he avoids; and is finally heart-broken with jealousy and disappointment, when he appears carrying out his intention of marrying her cousin, *Donna Laura* (Miss C. Carson). *Diana*, in her helplessness, and as a last hope of awakening *Don Cæsar's* love, promises her hand to *Don Louis*, much to that prince's chagrin, he being betrothed to *Donna Laura*. Through *Perin's* influence, *Don Cæsar's* show of indifference is kept up to the very last, and just as the unhappy *Diana* is about to formally take *Don Louis* as her husband, the chance arrives for her to confess her love, and hear that the

faithful *Cæsar* is still unchanged. The arduous character of *Diana* is admirably suited to the powers of Mrs. Vezin, who pourtrayed the cold, unfeeling, scorn—and, afterwards, the plaintive love of the princess, with equal intensity and sweetness. Mr. Hermann-Vezin, as *Don Cæsar*, did his best; having, except in his love declaration, merely to appear perfectly careless, which he most certainly did. The gay, volatile, amiably deceitful *Perin*, found a most able representative in Mr. George Vining, to whose exuberant style the part is specially suited. *Don Gaston* is far beneath the powers of Mr. David Fisher. Miss C. Carson, as *Laura*, Miss Emma Barnett as *Fenisia*, and Miss Rebecca Powell as *Floretta*, gave every effect to those very slight characters. The applause during the piece was considerable, and Mrs. Vezin was honoured with a call at the end of the second act, appearing again with Mr. Vezin and Mr. Vining at the end.

HAYMARKET AND ADELPHI.

The bills remain unchanged; the two popular favourites, "*Leah*" and "*Lord Dundreary*," being likely to draw for some time to come. The ubiquitous Mr. J. L. Toole plays first at the Adelphi, and finishes his evenings to the great delight of the St. James's audience.

STRAND.

A new farce, entitled "*Margate Sands*," was on Monday last produced, and follows Mr. Byron's attractive extravaganza of "*Orpheus*." The piece is very slight, and indeed hackneyed in conception, as a leading feature in it has been "done" some time ago. But its situations are sufficiently absurd, and its fun sufficiently broad to provoke the laughter of the easily gratified multitude. For, furnish a London audience with a few familiar allusions, introduce a known locality, and colour the whole with a slangy description of humour, and you have sufficient material to secure a successful run of the piece, be it ever so improbable and ever so weak. In the present case, the plot is briefly this:—Two visitors, the one an eccentric husband, the other an elegant hairdresser in search of matrimony, are down at Margate. *Mr. Pilrington*, the benedick, wearied of living at Margate, for which he had left his wife, has written to her to rejoin him; *Mr. Curlycrop*, the hairdresser, has made a rendezvous with a fair correspondent on the subject of matrimony. Both gentlemen are on the sands, and get into the same machine to await their respective fair ones. A mistake in each other's clothes after bathing is prolific of dreadful confusion. As the ladies on arriving, fail to recognise their husbands, and, in fact believe "the other to be the which." Hence the fun. Mr. Belford and Miss Kate Carson enacted the unfortunate couple with great energy, and Mr. Wood and Miss Maria Simpson were ludicrous enough as the hairdresser from Pimlico and his love.

ASTLEY'S.

On Monday evening, Mr. E. T. Smith produced for the first time, at this Theatre, Mr. Fitzball's favourite drama, "*Momentous Question*," which, in conjunction with the popular pantomime, has been most successfully represented to crowded and first rate audiences every evening during the week.——On Tuesday, Mr. E. T. Smith, the lessee, presented silver cups to several artists and officials of the establishment, namely: Mr. T. Higgie, stage manager; Mr. J. Gates, scenic artist; Mr. Sloman, machinist; Mr. Laurie, costumier; Mr. Moon, property maker; and Mr. Pepper, gasfitter. And, that side the water, his enterprising neighbours, Messrs. Fenton and Frampton, at the VICTORIA, have a new piece in rehearsal, which we shall notice in our next impression.

NEW ROYALTY.

This snug little theatre is full every night from the attractions of the farce, "*Stolen, or 20l. Reward;*" Mr. Burnand's capital comic drama, "*Madame Berliof's Ball;*" and the well-tried sheet-anchor, "*Ixion.*"

SADLER'S WELLS.

Miss Marriott is now playing at this house in "*Peer and Peasant*," and this present 16th, the "*Duchess of Malfi*" is to be produced here.

GRECIAN.

We were sorry to find here, on the 7th inst., bills announcing the temporary indisposition of Mr. G. Conquest, the representative of *Man Friday*, in the pantomime, "*Robinson Crusoe.*" The character was undertaken by Mr. Manners, at a very short notice, and the leaps down the traps were performed by Mr. Ormond. Mr. G. Conquest's uncommon proficiency as a pantomimist renders the assumption of his part more than usually difficult to his deputies, who, it must be said do their best under the circumstances.

ROYAL COLOSSEUM.

Pantomime, in an umbrageous form reigns here, where all the world is a sheet and all the men and women merely shadows. Very funny is pantomime, too, and provocative of laughter at the shadowy pranks and tricks, and the immaterial knocks productive of audible smacks; and little and larger children chuckle over it immensely. Imagine a plain disc, white and stiff—in short, a sheet such as is used in magic-lantern display, and such as you know at the Colosseum. On this surface a number of shadows appear, all black without variation of shade, yet all individualised, so that there is no danger of your mistaking one for the other. There are many of them; for the story selected is that of "*Red Riding Hood*," pleasantly told by Mr. George Buckland in facetious terms, half jocular, half rhythmical, and with a pianoforte accompaniment. We have *Red Riding Hood* herself, known pantomimically as *Annette*, to whom, as Mr. Buckland informs us, her cloak acted as godfather and godmother by giving her a name; and we have her mamma and grandmamma, of historical reminiscence, and *Lupus*, the *Wolf*. To these added come a youthful lover of *Annette*, in knickerbockers, rejoicing in the appropriate name of *Sweetheart*, and a rival of *Annette's* love (of Scottish extraction, apparently), called *Neerdoweel*. The nature of the piece allows of no scenery, which in shadow would simply obliterate the actors; so much has to be left to the imagination. We have accordingly to suppose the first tableau on the cloth represents the interior of the cottage of *Riding Hood's* mamma, a lady of sedentary and domestic habits, who is represented engaged in needlework. While thus engaged—"tatting," probably—*Neerdoweel* vainly endeavours to prosecute his suit, and is snubbed by his *inamorata*, who manifests a decided preference for *Sweetheart*. The intervals between the tableaux are marked by a very pretty transparent drop, arranged on magic-lantern principles, representing the different events of the story. The next tableau shows us *Lupus* and *Neerdoweel* in inharmonious concert. A fair is announced to take place in the village, and *Sweetheart* decides upon going, against his better judgment, accompanied by his rival. Then enters *Red Riding Hood*, on her way to grandmamma's, and, fatigued by the distance, she sits down to rest. Instantly the *Wolf* appears *en grande tenue*, got up as a courtly gentleman. He endeavours to make himself generally agreeable, but with only indifferent success; he gets out of her, however, the address of her grandmamma, and sets off on a slaughterous errand. We have then a fair-scene with a slangy showman, and with *Neerdoweel* tempting *Sweetheart* with porter and dice. *Sweetheart*, however, is very amative, and determines upon going in search of *Riding Hood*. In the next scene, the cottage of grandmamma, a great many laughable incidents occur. First, there is the old lady, bed-ridden, but very cheerful; indeed, she indulges in a song on topical subjects, not forgetting the recent royal cause for rejoicing. To her enters *Lupus* in *propriâ personâ*; and the old lady, in an agony of fright, tumbles out of bed, runs round and round the room, in *dishabille*, and under the bed, whither *Lupus* follows, and when he emerges it is alone. The old lady has been devoured! Thereupon follows his attack on *Little Red Riding Hood*, and his capture by the general company; after which the grandmamma re-enters in a rather unaccountable manner, and changes the characters. In the harlequinade a tight-rope scene is produced, a phantom policeman is knocked a good deal about, and a lot of comic business merrily performed. Altogether the shadow-pantomime is very amusing, at which nobody can take umbrage.

VICTORIA HALL, NOTTING HILL.—The gentlemen amateurs of the Kensington Park Dramatic Club gave the first of their entertainments at the above Hall on Thursday last. It was remarkably well attended, many of the old habitués of the late Campden House being present, to replace which in the neighbourhood the present pretty little theatre has been erected. The building was well filled in every part; and we trust the good cause of charity, for which these performances are given, will be benefited. The committee have evidently gone to great trouble and expense; and the manner in which the pieces were placed on the stage reflected the greatest credit upon their manager, Captain Walton. "*Plot and Passion*," preceded by a prologue, spoken by Miss Kate Rivers, was selected for the opening; and rarely have we seen amateurs play more steadily, or witnessed a more splendid piece of acting than that of the *De Neuville* of Mr. Alfred Murray. In the third act, especially where he discovers the guilt of *Madame de Fontanges*, and also in his final scene with *Touche* he displayed a depth of feeling marvellous for one who has not made the stage his profession. A little more attention to what is technically called the business of the scene, and a careful avoidance of all trace of mimicry would leave Mr. Murray few superiors among amateurs. The *Desmarets* of V. Grame, was also very good. A special word of praise is due to Miss Rivers for her very effective rendering of the arduous part of *Madame de Fontanges*. Mr. Charles Mathews's farce of "*Little Toddlekins*," capitally played, brought the evening to a very satisfactory conclusion, and we may fairly congratulate the management on the success of their first night.

The WINCHESTER, Pentonville, one of the most convenient amateur theatres in London, has, after passing through certain vicissitudes, been taken by Mr. Concannon.

We hear, but cannot vouch for the truth of the information, that RICHMOND THEATRE is likely to be opened for a short time, and that the principal feature of the entertainment will be a well-appointed ballet.

We believe Mr. Tom Taylor's new comedy is completed, and ready to be put into rehearsal at the HAYMARKET whenever it may be needed; but, judging from the attraction of the altered, if not amended, version, of "*Our American Cousin*," the time for that well-known piece of extravagance to be heard of no more is yet very far distant. The new comedy will embrace the full strength of the company.

Provincial.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.]

MANCHESTER.

JANUARY 13.

Notwithstanding the fact that an amount of commercial depression exists in our mighty cottonopolis, which may, without fear of untruth, be stated to be unparalleled, it is, equally so, also a fact, that there is no period on record which may be referred to as having been more remarkable for numerous and varied amusements. These continue to be supported with an amount of success literally astounding. It matters little where we look, whether in the theatres, concert rooms, circus amphitheatres, or elsewhere, all seem to present the same prosperous aspect. However, it is fortunate for the caterers that this liberal patronage is accorded, since it has another and better influence as regards society, viz., it justifies the evidently commendable purpose of rendering the entertainments, generally so, less open to question on the score of want of elevating character. During the festive season of Christmas time here there has been an amount of musical entertainment promised, and successfully supported, which evidences the pleasant reflection that our city has, at least in some degree, a right to the privilege of being termed "Musical Manchester;" yet, with all this before us, it is equally clear that we may reasonably look forward with the hope of seeing many circumstances of local advantage springing up and flourishing. It is true that the concerts at the Free Trade Hall present, on Oratorio nights, a very respectable vocal phalanx, to which we must accord a just meed of praise; but, notwithstanding all this, we would earnestly urge the desirability of establishing MUSICAL UNIONS in each district and suburb; for what proportion, it may be reasonably asked, does the something-over-two-hundred voices (which form the chorus on the occasions mentioned) bear to the vast aggregate resident in Manchester and its immediate neighbourhoods? Let each lover of music in the several districts estimate the advantageous practicability of the suggestion we have made, and we shall have no fears for the results we so earnestly hope to, ere long, see realised. The importance of the circumstances we so strongly recommend must plead excuse (if such be necessary) for the digression from our general custom; but it is our purpose to advocate the desirability of bringing home to the domestic hearth the humanising and elevating influences of music in a far more important degree than is possible if the capabilities of "the art divine" are limited to the mere drawing-room ballad. The eleventh of the series (of twenty) of grand concerts, under the direction of Mr. Charles Hallé, took place on Thursday, the 7th inst., in the presence of a very large and highly intelligent audience, the oratorio of "*Samson*" being given on the occasion. Although circumstances occurred which have prevented the assembling of the usual large numbers, the anticipation fortunately proved unfounded. We allude to the fact, that on the previous Tuesday, Mr. Hallé received a telegram from Mr. Sims Reeves, who had been engaged for the part of *Samson*, intimating

that, in consequence of a very severe cold, our great tenor would be unable to fulfil his engagement, but that Mr. Wilbye Cooper had kindly undertaken to sing the music of the hero in Mr Reeve's absence. Many speculative opinions were expressed, but it would be an act of the most flagrant injustice to Mr. Cooper if we, for an instant, hesitated to give to that gentleman all the commendation he deserves; for, while admitting that there may not be the same amount of resonant force in Mr. Cooper's voice as in that of Mr. Reeves, we are quite sure that the most critically-inclined listener would generously admit that the arduous task was performed with an amount of artistic skill which left scarcely the smallest possible reason for ultimate regret. We may not pretend to enumerate all the many points of excellent judgment included in the rendering of the music allotted to "*Samson*;" but we must not omit to notice the difficult air, "Total Eclipse," and the expressive recitative which precedes it. This, as also the tenor air in the third part of the oratorio, "Thus when the sun," were given with a refinement and *definition*, so to speak, which evidenced the highly qualified artist. The other principals on the occasion were Madame Parepa, Mrs. Brooke, and Mr. Santley. Of the former we may record that she sang the peculiar music allotted to her with great care, but it was evident that, in the early portions, the *artiste* was not musically at home. The more brilliant and declamatory song, "Let the bright seraphim," was cleverly rendered, and magnificently accompanied by Mr. Elwood. We have previously referred to the beauty of the trumpet *obligato* accompaniments given by this very fine performer, and are glad to be again able to say that probably few persons are to be found in whose hands this instrument is so effective. This song was *encored*. The various portions of the work which belong to the *contralto* voice were sung by one of our local *artistes*, Miss Brooke, and we, without disrespect to other names possessing repute, distinctly affirm that we do not know any *contralto* at present in the list of public vocalists who could have rendered the task more effectively. Indeed, it is not too much to say, that the truly Handelian and beautiful air, "Return, O God of Hosts," was a very close approximation to perfection. We may also particularise the Recitative in the second part of the oratorio, "Here lies the proof," which was given with an amount of declamatory energy worthy of imitation, and we may still further commend the execution of the air (in the third part of the work), "Ye sons of Israel," also an exceedingly fine performance, deserving the applause it elicited. We are indeed very glad to be enabled to report thus highly of the efforts of a local *artiste*, since it is, we sincerely regret to say, a novelty, indeed, to see the name of a Manchester vocalist in any of the announcements in connection with these concerts; and the fact savours somewhat of a want of that generous feeling which would tend to elevate, rather than lessen or derogate from, the estimation of the management by the public; inasmuch as Manchester may, unhesitatingly, boast of a great amount of "native worth" and talent. We sincerely hope that the day is not far distant when the circumstance complained of may have become a thing of the past. Of the efforts of Mr. Santley (if they may be termed efforts) we must record the fact, that probably there is no voice, at present at command, so eminently capable of doing justice to oratorio music, whether it be the more expressive character of the part of *Manoah* (the father of *Samson*), or that of the bolder and warrior-like *Harapha*. Our excellent baritone was equally successful in the first part of the oratorio. The air, "Thy glorious deeds inspired my tongue" (*Manoah*), was beautifully sung, while in the second division of the work, the soul-exciting song, "Honour and Arms" (*Harapha*), was rendered with *nerve* and energy in all respects admirably. In the third part of the oratorio, another opportunity occurs for Mr. Santley to show the truly artistic powers he possesses, and it would be almost an absurdity to expect anything more expressively beautiful than the air, "How willing my paternal love" (*Manoah*). Of the choruses we can speak most highly, and when all were comparatively good, it becomes very difficult to remark any very extra particularly successful instance. Perhaps, however, the "Fixed in his everlasting seat," may be specially commended, as also the concluding chorus, "Let their celestial concerts." The band was all that could be desired, the choruses being further supported by the organ, in the hands of Mr. Henry Walker. A somewhat rich programme is promised for the twelfth concert of the series, of which we hope to report in due course.

Increasing popularity, and, consequently, crowded houses, is a fact appertaining to the pantomimic attractions at both of the theatres here. At the THEATRE ROYAL, the "*Sleeping Beauty*" is got up with an amount of costly excellence which certainly deserves all the extensive encouragement it has already secured, and the crowds which on each representation gathered within the walls of this popular establishment, gives unmistakeable evidences of their excitement and delight; the small preparatory drama which precedes the all-absorbing circumstance of attraction being almost a bore, rather than matter of satisfaction. In a no less degree, does the other theatre—the QUEEN'S—become each night, an arena where fun of the most laughter-provoking kind reigns supreme; the success of the management of the truly droll pantomime, "*Sindbad the Sailor*" (Charles Horsman), is an unmistakeable fact, every practicable scenic appliance has been resorted to for the purpose of rendering all the varied and numerous incidents in the career of "the old Man of the Sea," as herein depicted, as descriptive as possible, and we may specially remark that the transformation scene is indeed exquisitely beautiful. The house has been crowded to the very ceiling every night.——Mr. and Mrs. Calvert are at the FREE TRADE HALL, giving a series of Dramatic Readings; very evident satisfaction being realised by the audiences on the several occasions when these accomplished artists have essayed their acknowledged skill in this particular department of the dramatic art.

LIVERPOOL.

JANUARY 13TH.

"*Hummel's Mass in* D, *No.* 3," has been for the first time performed here, with the instrumental accompaniments, at St. Francis Xavier's, Salisbury-street. This mass, compared with those of Haydn and Beethoven, bears but slight resemblance to the latter in profound modulations and instrumentation; the "*Gloria*," however, follows very closely the style of the former. Those who know how to appreciate the sublime conceptions of a mass will delight in this one. It demands constant attention, but it is replete with genuine grandeur and noble thoughts. Though difficult, the working of the fugues is still comprehensible by the musician. The mass commences with a solemn introduction in D minor, ♩ *andante*, oboe solo, clarionette and fagottie obligato, accompanied by the stringed instruments. The subject is taken up by the voices, piano (No. 1, "*Kyrie*"); this chorale is effectively aided by *sforzandos* of the wind instruments, and leads, with quaint modulations, to "*Christe eleison*," in F major, which is rich in the accompaniments. The first theme is then resumed, ending in D minor. No. 2, "*Gloria*," D major, common time, *allegro con spirito*, is bold, but terminates in four bars on two pauses. "*Et in terra*" is accompanied by the violins, leading through some vigorous harmonies to the second subject, "*Qui tollis*," *andante*, ♩, in B minor, pp., the voices in unison. The theme, on resuming, is interrupted with the "*Suscipe*" (bassos and altos in unison, FF), and the following chorus, "*Miserere nobis*," pp., has a divine effect. "*Quoniam*," tempo 1mo, resumes the first subject. The grand *fuga alla breve* is boldly introduced, the bassos leading a subject of eight bars, which is taken up in succession by tenors, altos, and sopranos. Very effective modulations interpose, and the bassos lead again in B minor. The subject is heard repeatedly, when the bassos for the third time are heard leading in C major, working to the coda "Amen," employing the whole strength of the orchestra, and ending sublimely. No. 3, "*Credo*," *moderato*, ♩, D major, strings (*con sordino*), lead with a long *roulade*, accompanied by the voices pp., and occasional solos for the *corni*. With careful attention, the master-mind of the author may be followed; this movement, which almost borders on tediousness, terminates heavily, but the "*Et Incarnatus*" in B flat rewards the listener with a flow of genuine and enchanting melody. This movement is accompanied only by viole, cellos, and contra-bassi, fagotti obligato, and is one of the most charming pieces ever penned by Hummell. "*Crucifixus*," in B flat minor, is led by the violins (each beat in the bar *tremolo*), modulating into A major. "*Et Resurrexit*" tempo 1mo *pp.* is a dramatical working up of semitones to FF. "*Et Ascendit in Cœlum*" is a movement rich in descriptive conception, exhibiting in some chromatic passages masterly skill, as in "*Et Expecto Resurrectionem*," which brings the D major again, and leads to the *fuga*, "*Et Vitam*." The tenori with the subject of ten bars are leading and accelerating the number to the grand *coda*, where sopranos are made to hold it (above the stave) for seven bars, ending with an effective "Amen." No. 4, "*Sanctus*," adagio common-time, is charmingly devotional, leading to the "*Osanna*" allegro and "*Benedictus*," which is a gem, accompanied by the violins (*con sordino*) in roulades, with clarinetti and fagotti soli, and occasional flauto passages. These are curiously supported by the timpani *tremolo*. It is seldom that this movement can be given entire on account of prolonging the service. In No. 5, "*Agnus Dei*," D minor, common-time, the voices modulate in the first bar to A minor, and are responded to by a sweet symphony of five bars, with clarinetti solo. This recurs three times, changing the key with marvellous effect, and bringing the work to the "*Dona Nobis*," in D major, *alla breve*, which, after a pause, assumes a grand *canone* shape, ending (*devoto* and *pp.*) in the "*Da Pacem*." The performing of the *Mass* was very creditable to the choir, and particularly so to the orchestra, under Mr. Jackson, the leader. Mr. Helsby, the organist, rendered good assistance by judicious accompaniments in the *forte* passages which needed support. We are indebted for this work, and its efficient performance, to the conductor, J. Caffaratta, Esq., who has enriched this choir with the choicest works of the most eminent composers.

The pantomime at the THEATRE ROYAL, the superiority of which, as compared with the efforts of previous years, is so strenuously asserted by the local papers, requires no comment; suffice it to observe it is a monument of managerial enterprise.——At the AMPHITHEATRE, "*The Child of Hale*," revived from traditions of the THEATRE ROYAL, continues. Mr. Craven's drama of "*Miriam's Crime*," was produced last week, but for some unaccountable reason has been withdrawn in favour of "*Robert Macaire*." It is, however, underlined for production on Monday next, with the advantage of the original *Miriam West* (Miss Kate Saville).——In the meantime, Mr. Henderson, at the PRINCE OF WALES, has produced the drama in first-rate style, "under the personal superintendence of the author," who was called on, the first night, and made his first bow before a Liverpool audience. We are promised a new drama from Mr. Craven's pen, in which the author himself will take a part. For the fashion of doubling *rôle* of author and player, first introduced by Byron, who played here in his last Strand burlesque, seems to find much favour with the public, who are glad to welcome a class of their fellow-creatures hitherto consisting of mysterious and retiring *rarœ aves*.

SCOTLAND.

JANUARY 13TH.

EDINBURGH.—What—to the inquiring and speculative dramatic mind, ever in search of change—can there be to record in the provinces during the weeks of pantomime? Say the pantomime runs smoothly and well; and did anybody ever know a pantomime that did *not* run smoothly after the first six nights, save one, namely, the one at the Theatre Royal, Plymouth, where the management has just been compelled to change the opening, and substitute "*George de Barnwell*" for the "*Three Bears*," to please the—not pigs: no—public? Where were we? Oh, ah. Say the pantomime runs smoothly, is there anything more to say until that pantomime goes where all our transformations go, and is no more? Well, the race of pantomime continues: the ROYAL first, PRINCESS'S a good second, and PRINCE OF WALES nowhere. The last, indeed, has given up, and finishes this week. Mr. Sam Johnson is attractive at the THEATRE ROYAL, both in the pantomime and in front-pieces. The FREEMASON'S HALL is given up to Pepperian influences, and haunted men and repentant misers and phantom flower-girls frequent the place nightly—and morningly too sometimes, performance commencing at two. Then to-night (Wednesday) we are to have an amateur concert of Volunteers—Volunteers having kindly consented to act in concert on this occasion only—and the Mid-Lothian Coast Artillery, under immense patronage (dukes and earls and princes, and all sorts of things), are to come out with their fourth annual brilliancy; and, among many other attractions, a prologue by a rising local *littérateur*, Mr. Henry Clarke, is to be a principal feature.——We have recently had a lecture from Professor John Hullah in, the PHILOSOPHICAL INSTITUTION, being the first of two on the Secular Composition of Handel. The dissertation was very able:—

Many of his hearers (he said), enthusiastic Handelians, who looked upon that great genius as the Milton of musicians—would hear of these secular compositions with something of surprise and possibly with something of displeasure; for to such persons—whatever he might be to the musical antiquary or scholar—Handel was distinguished as a musician who above all others had brought his powers to bear on the illustration of Divine truth—whose notes were connected with words the most precious, facts the most tremendous, and truths the most important that had been revealed to man. Handel, he might say, was distinctly the musician of the Bible—nay more, of the English Bible—and the work with which his name was chiefly associated in the minds of the largest number of Christian men and women in these islands, was that in which he illustrated the series of passages in the great scheme of man's redemption as revealed to us in the Old and New Testaments. Those persons, he repeated, who

knew Handel only as the composer of the great Oratorio, since called the "Messiah," would learn with something of surprise how large a portion of his life was spent in work of a very different character, and would give their attention to these works at first perhaps a little unwillingly. They need not fear, however, that they would hear anything that would lower their esteem of Handel either as a man or a musician. They would find that Handel, the theatrical manager, who, during the first thirty years of his life gave his time to the composition of operas and music of a similar class, was the same honest, truthful, God-fearing man, as he who so thoroughly devoted his latter years to compositions which, as he himself expressed it, were better fitted than his former works to the decline of life, and which, he hoped, would not only entertain his hearers, but make them better men. He felt assured that, in whatever aspect Handel was regarded, they would find some new cause for admiration in the strength, the grace, and, above all the variety offered in him to their consideration. Those who had hitherto only regarded him as the composer of sacred music, were they to reflect that had his career been limited to anything like the number of years of a me of the most celebrated of modern composers, would find that the world would never have heard anything about the sacred music with which his name was so intimately associated, and that had he died at an early period of life, he would have left behind him nothing but his secular compositions. Having given a brief sketch of Handel's life subsequent to his twenty-fifth year, when he came to England, the lecturer proceeded to speak of the secular works of the great composer, and to give some details regarding them. These, he said, comprised no less than four German operas, thirty-nine Italian operas, one English opera, two Italian serenades, seven works which, for want of a better generic name, he would call secular oratorios, and about 180 detached pieces of chamber music, to which must be added a mass of instrumental music which he was at a loss how to classify. All these, with the exception of four German and six Italian operas, were the work of thirty-two years. During the greater part of this period of his artistic life Handel had on his hands the management of an Italian opera company, an occupation generally sufficient in itself to exhaust the physical force, ruin the temper, and make an utter wreck of an ordinary man. From this it would be seen that long before the great musician had turned his attention to the composition of the sacred music with which his name was so inseparably associated, he had composed a large quantity of secular music, and had led what might be considered a very active and laborious life.

The lecture was illustrated by selections from the operas "Rinaldo" and "Sosarme," the "Water Music," chamber duets, and "Acis and Galatea," sung by Mrs. Howard, Mr. Norman Kirby, Mr. Strang, and a chorus under the direction of Mr. Adam Hamilton.

IRELAND.

JANUARY 12TH.

DUBLIN.—At the THEATRE ROYAL the pantomime is now preceded by a new drama, entitled "*Miriam's Crime*," first performed at the Strand Theatre, under the management of Mr. Swanborough, in October, 1863. It is very well cast, and has made a good impression. Miss Catherine Rodgers, who still continues to gain in public favour, personates the character of *Miriam West* with the same talent and effect with which she has sustained every part she has undertaken in Dublin. Mr. Lewis Wilmot, in *Clarkson Biles*, has adopted a capital "make-up," and in a good legitimate manner keeps the audience constantly amused. As time proceeds, the opinion gains ground that Mr. Wilmot is the best low comedian we have had for some years. Mr. Sidney Bancroft as *Bernard Reynolds*, Mr. Huntley as *Scumley*, and Mr. O'Dell as *Huffin*, contribute much, by their excellent acting, to the success with which the piece has been attended.——At the QUEEN'S, a serio-comic drama, entitled "*The Slave Brother; or the Power of Love*," has been brought out, and is received on each repetition with much applause. It is a translation from the French of "*Le Chevalier St. George*." The characters are all well, and some ably, fulfilled, Miss Annie Parker adding another wreath to her well-earned laurel by her performance of the *Countess de Presle*. Mr. F. Robson, junior, as *Julien*, deserves favourable mention, and Mr. J. F. Warden, as the *Chevalier St. George*, gives, as usual, strength and importance to the cast. This piece will doubtless add to the already considerable attraction of a very good pantomime.

The monthly meeting of "The Hibernian Catch Club" took place at Dublin, on Tuesday evening, when a most distinguished company assembled to hear "the catch and glee go round." His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant had signified his intention of honouring the meeting by his presence, but an apology was received in the course of the day. The members, however, had some compensation by the presence of his grace the Duke of Leinster, who, it is said for the first time graciously favoured the society by a visit, and judging from appearances it might be supposed that a similar honour would not be far distant. In the absence of the President, "the Right Hon. Lord Justice of Appeal," Doctor Beatly, fulfilled the duty with characteristic efficiency. The Right Hon. the Attorney General, and several distinguished members of the bar were present. The musical members did not muster strong, but the glees were, notwithstanding, given with the care and effect, which the very walls of this classic Institution seem to demand. "By Celia's Arbour" (Horsley), was sung by Mr. O'Rorke, Mr. B. Mallen, and Mr. J. M. Finlayson, the last a distinguished amateur, possessing an alto voice of rare and rich quality. Amongst a very choice collection, the following were sung: "Come bounteous May" (Spofforth), "When winds breathe soft" (Weber), "Hail smiling morn!" Mr. J. Mapath's favourite arrangement of "Faithless Emma," in which Messrs. Keane, Fletcher, Baker, O'Rorke, B. Mallen, and W. Talbot severally sustained their parts as good glee singers. The late Doctor Smith's pleasing trio "Queen of the Sea" must not be forgotten, in which Mr. Levey added the violin obligato. The arrangements were, as usual, under Mr. Russell's careful guidance, most satisfactory.——Mr. H. C. Cooper's Operatic Company continues to attract crowded audiences at CORK. Rossini's eternally favourite "*Barbiére*" was given on Saturday evening last. The local journals are loud in their praise, one speaks thus: "Mr. Cooper and the talented instrumentalists under his direction, rendered its brilliant music incidental to the piece in a masterly manner. Mdlle. Tonnelier, Miss Annie Long, Messrs. Bowler, Durand and Connell, were all admirable in their respective characters. Mr. Durand personating the sprightly *Barber* with considerable humour. Mr. Summer's *Bartole* was also most effective." This *troupe* seem to have made a strong impression in this "beautiful city" as their successful periodical returns seem to be regarded as a matter of course.——A grand concert was given in the ASSEMBLY ROOMS, Newry, on Monday evening, by the "Newry Choral Society." Mrs. Russell (late Miss Gunn), and Mr. Fletcher Baker (from La Scala, Milan), were the *artistes* engaged. A varied and attractive programme of Sacred and Secular Music was performed with the aid of a chorus of 50 voices. Conductor, Mr. J. Russell. It is most creditable to this town of the "black North" to have established, and continue a successful musical society.

BELFAST.—Mr. Gustavus V. Brooke commenced an engagement here on Monday evening, when he opened in "*Othello*" to an excellent house. Although his voice was evidently out of order, and in some of the more exacting passages of declamation failed him much, still the local journals say—"He was able to accomplish many scenes and parts of scenes with all his wonted power and finish of delivery, and was successful in obtaining the frequent applause of a large audience. Miss Reinhardt played *Desdemona*, and made a favourable impression, and Miss Bland essayed the honest and fearless *Emilia* with good success." A good week's business may be confidently expected should all go smoothly.

WORCESTER.—*Choral Society.*—The first concert for the season of the Worcester Choral Society was held at the Music-hall on Tuesday evening, when the spacious room was well filled with the principal families of the city and neighbourhood. The principal vocal parts were sustained by Miss Fanny Armytage, Mr. Hunt, and Mr. Briggs. The concert commenced with the National Anthem, after which came the madrigal "My mistress is as fair as fine." Mr. Hunt then sung Reichard's Love Request, "Now the day is slowly waning," which was received with applause, though the audience, doubtless on account of the length of the programme, abstained from giving such a demonstration of their approval as would lead to an encore. A part song, arranged by Lealie, was well rendered, as was also a selection from Bellini's Italian Opera "*Sonnambula*" "Ah! non Creadea Mizarti," by Miss Fanny Armytage. The duet, "More glorious to die than in chains long repining," by Messrs. Hunt and Briggs was very tastefully sung, and evidently appreciated by the audience. The quartet, "In this hour of soften'd splendour," sung by Miss Fanny Armytage, Miss Pullen, and Messrs. Hunt and Briggs, is a very tasteful composition, and was very well sung. The madrigal "Corin for Cleora dying" followed, after which Mr. Briggs sang in his well-known style Hatton's "Gallant Knight." "The Fisherman's Song" and quartet, by Miss F. Armytage, Miss Pullen, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Briggs, and chorus, was one of the most effective bits of the evening, the solos being by Messrs. Hunt and Briggs. The chorus "Fair as a bride the morning is waking," was rapturously encored. The second part, Macfarren's "Christmas Carol," in six parts, admirably descriptive of the festive season, was exceedingly well sustained by Miss F. Armytage, Miss Pullen, and Messrs. Hunt and Briggs, who were ably seconded by the orchestra in the choruses. The first part represented winter, with the wind sadly moaning through the leafless branches of the trees; the frozen streams, and descending snow; while within all were gathered round the fire on the hearth. The second part pictured families united once more, and showed long-parted friends again met in the home of their childhood. Then followed a Christmas song, "A blessing on this noble house, and all who in it dwell," supposed to be sung by the village waits; after which comes a Christmas tale, in which the good King Alfred's charity to the wayfaring pilgrim is rewarded, in which the soloist, Mr. Briggs, is sustained by the whole chorus. In No. 5, the duet, by Miss Armytage and Miss Pullen, "Little children, all rejoice," those ladies had to pay the penalty for their pleasing powers by having to respond to an unanimous encore. The finale, descriptive of the seasonable spread and the evening's amusement, was effectively rendered by the whole choir. Mr. Done officiated as conductor, and Master Taylor presided at the pianoforte. The evening's entertainment was calculated to afford gratification to the crowded assemblage by whom all the pieces were well received; although, doubtless on account of the lengthy programme, the audience were good natured enough not to often express their approval in such a demonstrative way as to call for a repetition of the performance. We (*Worcestershire Chronicle*) may well congratulate the society on making so good a commencement of the season.

TORQUAY. Jan. 13.—The first of a series of six *Matinées Musicales* was given by Messrs. W. Vinning and M. G. Rice on Thursday last, in Reynolds' pianoforte saloon. The room was well filled, and the programme, which consisted chiefly of works of a high class, included, among other things, Beethoven's Sonata in c minor, for pianoforte and violin; selections from Mendelssohn's "*Lieder ohne Worte*;" two duets for two pianofortes, by Chopin and Thalberg; and a *morceau* by Pauer. Madame O'Leary Vinning was the vocalist, and sang Rossini's Cavatina, "*Una Voce*;" "The Lady of the Lea," by H. Smart; and Arthur O'Leary's ballad, "Kate of Aberdeen." This lady possesses a rich and powerful contralto voice of good execution, and sang on this occasion most charmingly. In "Kate of Aberdeen," which by the way is a new and extremely well-written song, she was *encored*, and in everything she sang she made a very favourable impression on the audience.

RYDE, ISLE OF WIGHT. Jan. 11.—On Christmas-day, and the following Sunday, a Mass in B flat, composed by Dr. Holloway, was performed (with some orchestral accompaniment), at the Catholic church of St. Mary, Ryde. The portions of the composition most admired were the "*Gloria*" and the "*Benedictus*." Mr. Salter presided at the organ; and the careful playing of this gentleman, together with the skilful performance of Mr. Conduit on the double bass, contributed much to the success of the work. Dr. Holloway was for some years the organist of St. Mary's, Ryde, his present position being that of organist to Lord Arundell of Wardour castle, near Salisbury.

OXFORD. Jan. 14.—The vacant organistship in this University, at Exeter College, has been conferred without competition on Mr. C. D. Macleane, Mus. Bac., scholar of the college.

HANDEL BORN FOR ALL AGES.—The late profound musical theorist, Baumgarten, remarking on the incessant fluctuation of musical taste, justly observed, that the strongest possible test of genius, in some of the old compositions, is their surviving the age in which they were produced, and becoming the admiration of future masters. Handel's music has received this honour in a more eminent degree than even that of our own divine Purcell. By Boyce and Battishill the memory of the great German was adored; Mozart was enthusiastic in his praise; Haydn could not listen to his "*Messiah*" without weeping; and Beethoven has been heard to declare that, were he ever to come to England, he should uncover his head, and kneel down at his tomb. This seems to prove that Handel, like Shakespeare, was born for all ages, and, in despite of the versatility of taste, will ever be modern.

Letters from the Rev. Sir F. Gore Ouseley, Bart., M.A., Mus. Bac., Oxon., and other clergy and gentry, testifying to the marvellous effects of "Clark's Neuralgic Tincture," in Neuralgia, Tic-douloureux, Face and Tooth Ache, Ague, Nervous Head Ache, Brow Ague, Nervous Debility, etc., may be had of the proprietor W. W. CLARK, M.P.S., Dorking, Surrey. Sold by all Chemists, in bottles, at 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d.—[ADVT.]

NATIONAL SHAKESPEARE COMMITTEE.

The adjourned meeting of the National Shakespeare Committee was held on Monday, at the chambers of the Society of Arts. Mr. George Godwin was unanimously called to the chair.

The Secretary having read the minutes of the previous meeting, they were unanimously confirmed.

Mr. Theodore Martin then called attention to the irregularity of the proceedings of the committee, which were of such a character as to jeopardise the success of the undertaking. At the last meeting a draft of the report was read, which was very distinctly understood; but enough was understood to induce a large number of persons who were present to object to it, and the result was, that the question was adjourned till that day to consider the document. Judge of his surprise, when in the next day's papers he found that report put forward as the deliberate expression of opinion of the whole of that meeting. It was signed by the honorary secretaries, and he wished to know by whose authority it was sent before the public. It was a document that was discreditable to the committee; and if the secretaries took upon themselves to act in such a manner, it was a question whether they were the proper men to be allowed to retain such positions.

Mr. Hepworth Dixon, one of the honorary secretaries, said that the report was read publicly, and the reporters could have taken every word of it. Some of them asked him if, to save them the trouble of writing it, it would be sent to the papers, and he replied that it would; and it was accordingly sent to the papers and the committee.

Mr. Theodore Martin expressed his dissatisfaction at the explanation, and said he should be very careful in trusting himself in the care of the executive committee.

Mr. Tomlins said the secretaries had only consulted the convenience of the reporters, who might have taken it all down, and thereby had everything in it correct, instead of being liable to mistake. That was the whole fault in being secretaries.

After some further discussion,

Mr. Theodore Martin moved, "That the report read at the last meeting of the committee be rejected, and that a special committee be appointed to prepare an address to be issued to the public, stating the objects contemplated by the committee, and the means by which it is proposed to carry them out."

The Chairman said the committee had only brought this report forward for discussion, and if it were objected to they would withdraw it.

Considerable discussion followed on a matter of form; and although the chairman ruled that it was not competent to discuss a report that was not before the meeting,

Mr. Bell insisted on seconding the amendment; and after commenting upon the conduct of the committee in drawing up the report,

Mr. Hepworth Dixon explained the circumstances under which the committee had been organised, and moved, as an amendment to Mr. Martin's motion, that the meeting do pass on to the ordinary business of the day.

Mr. Charles Reed seconded the amendment, and regretted that any personality had been introduced into the discussion. They were all met for the purpose of carrying out a great national object, in which they ought to act without any feeling but that of completing their work in a manner that should be creditable to the country as a national memorial.

Several gentlemen desired to propose amendments, which were overruled by the chairman.

Mr. S. Lucas said the report was in the hands of the meeting, and they could not withdraw it without the consent of the meeting. He therefore agreed to the first part of Mr. Martin's motion, that the report ought to be rejected, but the latter part proposed to appoint a committee to do that which it said the present committee was incapable of doing. If that were the case, the only course the committee had to pursue was to resign, and he was not prepared to vote for taking that responsibility out of their hands.

After some further discussion, it was decided that Mr. Martin's amendment should be the original motion, and that Mr. Dixon's should be the amendment. The amendment was then put, and lost by a minority of 33 to 34.

An amendment was then moved, to the effect that the report presented at the last meeting be rejected.

A long, animated, and irregular discussion then followed, at the end of which the amendment was put and carried by a majority of 33 to 32.

Mr. Martin then moved a resolution to the effect that a committee be formed for the purpose of drawing up an address to be presented to the public, explaining the objects of the committee, and the means by which they proposed to carry them out.

Mr. Robert Bell seconded the motion, and disclaimed any personal feelings in the matter.

Mr. S. Lucas opposed the motion as inconvenient. It was too direct, and not direct enough. It did, in effect, displace the present executive committee, and yet in reality left them in existence. He, for one, would sooner go for the dissolution of the executive committee. He, however, thought that it might be strengthened by an infusion of new blood; but to pass that resolution would be a vote of censure on it, and it would be impossible for them to remain in office afterwards.

Dr. Marston, as a member of the executive committee, said the motion was of that character that it plainly said that committee was incompetent to do its work, and that a dissolution of it must take place if the resolution passed. He could not hold his position in any capacity whatever if the motion were carried. He then recapitulated the results of the labours of the executive committee and the position they were now in.

Dr. Vaughan said that was the first meeting he had attended, but he must say that if their meetings were to be of the complexion of that one their object was gone. The resolution was a vote of want of confidence in the committee, and not one of them could hold his position after it. If they did resign it would go from one end of the country to the other, and do infinite injury to their cause (hear, hear).

Mr. Martin expressed his willingness to withdraw his motion, and to agree to any proposal which would ensure the success of the undertaking (hear, hear).

Dr. Vaughan then moved that the executive committee appoint four of their number to meet four members to be appointed by the general committee, to draw up an address to the public.

Mr. Tomlins seconded the motion, and it was carried by a majority of 16 to 8.

Mr. Gruneisen moved that those gentlemen be Dr. Vaughan, Mr. Martin, Mr. Tom Taylor, and Mr. Shirley Brooks.

Mr. Tomlins seconded the motion, and it was agreed to.

Mr. H. Dixon then stated that arrangements had been made for a public meeting, which in all probability would be held at the Mansion House, and a deputation had that day waited upon the Lord Mayor for that purpose, and he would in all probability act as chairman for that day. They had appointed a committee to carry out the arrangements for that purpose. The committee consisted of the Lord Chief Baron, Sir Hugh Cairns, Mr. Serjeant Parry, Mr. Gruneisen, and Mr. Charles Reed. At the last meeting there was a site committee appointed, and now they would have to appoint a monument committee. It was proposed to appoint the following gentlemen on that committee:—The Archbishop of York, the Duke of Devonshire, the Earl of Clarendon, the Lord President of the Council, the President of the Society of Antiquaries, the President of the Royal Academy, the President of the Society of British Artists, the President of the Architectural Museum, the Master of Trinity, Professor of Sculpture, Royal Academy; David Roberts, R.A., Daniel Maclise, R.A., Clarkson Stanfield, R.A., George Godwin, R.A., &c.

Mr. Hepworth Dixon then read the following programme of the council:—

"The 300th birthday of Shakespeare shall be celebrated by laying the first stone of a memorial in London.

"The committee will use its influence to procure the observance of Saturday, April 23, 1864, as a general holiday.

"The committee propose to offer a gold medal, a silver medal, and a bronze medal for the first, second, and third best poem on Shakespeare.

"The committee propose that the foundation-stone be laid about noon, that an afternoon performance of Shakespearian music be given in Covent-garden, that a Shakespearian performance be given in Drury-lane in the evening, and that a great soirée be held, by permission, in Westminster Hall, at which Shakespearian books, prints, and other relics may be exhibited."

Mr. Lucas moved the adoption of the programme, to which an amendment was moved to the effect that the programme be referred to the committee.

On being put to the meeting, the amendment was lost, and the original motion carried by a majority of 22 to 19.

A conversation then ensued, when it was understood that the adoption of the committees, whose names had been read, was included in the programme.

The meeting was then adjourned for a week, and a vote of thanks to the chairman closed the proceedings.

Mr. E. T. SMITH'S DOG SHOW.

COURT OF EXCHEQUER. Wednesday, Jan. 13.

BROWN v. SMITH.

This case was tried before Mr. Baron Bramwell on the 27th of November last, when the jury returned a verdict for £15; leave being reserved to defendant to move for a nonsuit, and also a new trial, on the grounds that the verdict was against the weight of evidence.

The defendant was Mr. E. T. Smith, the lessee of Cremorne Gardens, and the declaration of the plaintiff stated that he had delivered to defendant a dog value £20 for the purpose of being exhibited at Ashburnham Hall during the dog show in March last, and that through his negligence the dog had been lost. The defendant pleaded not guilty, and that the dog was not delivered to defendant with a chain, as agreed upon.

Mr. Pearce now moved for a nonsuit and also for a new trial, on the grounds that the plaintiff had previously signed an agreement exonerating the defendant from any liability for the safe custody of the dog, and also that during the whole of the show, which lasted six days, the utmost care and precaution had been taken to secure the safety of the 1,500 dogs exhibited. On the trial several experienced witnesses had spoken to the excellent arrangements made for guarding against any theft or injury to the dogs, no less than forty extra men, sixteen policemen, two sergeants, and an inspector being engaged for the occasion. He contended that upon this substantial evidence he was entitled to a rule.

The Court granted the rule.

DRAMATIC COPYRIGHT.

LACY v. RHYS.

This was an action under the Dramatic Authors Copyright Act to recover penalties for representing a piece called the "Roll of the Drum," written by the late Mr. Thomas Wilkes, and assigned by his executors, both with regard to the copyright for publication and also the acting right. The case came on first for trial before Mr. Justice Blackburn, and in order to support his assignment the plaintiff had to put in the letters of administration. The assets were sworn at the time they were taken as under £20, and did not require a stamp. The copyright was afterwards sold to the plaintiff for a sum which made the assets more than £20, so that a stamp would be required. An objection was taken to the production of the letters of administration, on the ground that they were not stamped, upon which Mr. Justice Blackburn adjourned the trial to enable the plaintiff to get the document stamped, the costs of the day to abide the event. The case came on for trial again before the late Mr. Justice Wightman, when the letters of administration were produced stamped. An objection was then taken that the commissioners of stamps had no power to stamp the document, or that if they had, the document was not admissible in evidence, as a penalty was imposed for the omission to have it stamped with the proper amount. An objection was also taken that the plaintiff had failed to register the assignment in accordance with the provisions of the act. The Court refused the rule with regard to the penalty for non-stamping, that being a question for the government, but granted it on the point of registration.

Mr. H. T. Cole, Mr. Turner, and Mr. Stephenson, contended that registration was necessary to enable the plaintiff to recover.

Mr. Montague Williams and Mr. Day showed cause against the rule. The assignees had assigned to the plaintiff the copyright, both of publication and sale, and also of representation, and that with regard to the latter, its registration was not necessary under the 5th and 6th Vic., cap. 45, under the provisions of which act the plaintiff had proceeded.

The Court held that under the provisions of the act 5th and 6th Vict., registration was not necessary, and discharged the rule.

Rule discharged.

PIANO SWINDLING.

MARLBOROUGH STREET.—Mr. Bradlaugh, from the office of Mr. R. Leverson, St. Helen's-place, City, applied to Mr. Tyrrwhitt for summonses under the Fraudulent Trade Marks Act, just come into operation, against two auctioneers, for exposing for sale pianofortes bearing names which had been forged, and for refusing to give information from whom they were obtained. For exposing the pianos for sale, the auctioneer was liable, under the 4th section, to a fine of £5, and if with a guilty knowledge (under the 13th section), it was a misdemeanour, and punishable by fine or imprisonment, and the refusing to give information respecting the article rendered the auctioneer liable to a fine of £5 (under the 6th section.) Mr. Bradlaugh stated that one of the auctioneers told him that he ought to go against others as well as him, as there were plenty of others doing the same thing—namely, selling pianofortes with forged makers' names upon them.

Mr. Tyrrwhitt granted the summonses.

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